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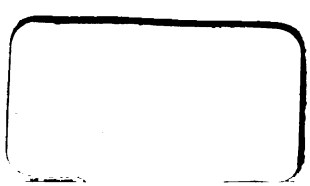

Michael Scott

TOM CRINGLE'S

1765

LOG.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

Philadelphia:
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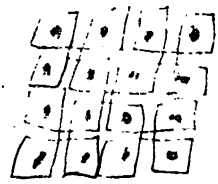

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TOM CRINGLE'S LOG.

VOMITO PRIETO.

(CONTINUED.)

The small twinkling lights from millions of lesser stars, in that part of the firmament where she hung, round as a silver pot-lid—shield I mean—were swamped in the flood of greenish-white radiance shed by her, and it was only a few of the first magnitude, with a planet here and there, that were visible to the naked eye, in the neighbourhood of her crystal bright globe; but the clear depth, and dark translucent purity of the profound, when the eye tried to pierce into it at the zenith, where the stars once more shone and sparkled thick and brightly, beyond the merging influence of the pale cold orb, no man can describe *now*—one could, *once*—but rest his soul, he is dead—and then to look forth far into the night, across the dark ridge of many a heaving swell of living water—but, "Thomas Cringle, ahoy—where the devil are you cruizing to?" So, to come back to my story. I went aft, and mounted the small poop, and looked towards the aforesaid moon, a glorious resplendent tropical moon, and not the paper lantern affair hanging in an atmosphere of fog and smoke, about which

your blear-eyed poets *haver* so much. By the by, these gentry are fond of singing of the *blessed* sun—were they sailors they would *bless* the moon also, in place of writing such wearisome poetry with regard to her *blighting* propensities. But I have lost the end of my yarn once more, in the strands of these parentheses—Why, what a word to pronounce in the plural!—I can no more get out now, than a girl's silkworm from the innermost of a nest of pill-boxes, where, to ride the simile to death at once, I have warped the thread of my story so round and round me, that I can't for the life of me unravel it. Very odd all this. Since I have recovered of this fever, every thing is slack about me; I can't set up the shrouds and backstays of my mind, not to speak of bobstays, if I should die for it. The running rigging is all right enough, and the canvass is there; but I either can't set it, or when I do, I find I have too little ballast, or I get involved amongst shoals, and white water, and breakers—don't you hear them roar? —which I cannot weather, and crooked channels, under some lee-shore, through which I cannot scrape clear. So down must go the anchor, as at present, and there—there goes the chain-cable, rushing and rumbling through the hause-hole. But I suppose it will be all right by and by, as I get stronger.

"But rouse thee, Thomas! Where *is* the end of your *yarn*, that you are blarneying about?"

"Avast heaving, you swab you—avast—if you had as much calomel in your corpus as I have at this present speaking—why, you would be a lad of more metal than I take you for, that is all.—You would have about as much quicksilver in your stomach, as I have in my purse, and all my silver has been *quick*,

ever since I remember, like the jests of the gravedigger in Hamlet—but, as you say, where the devil *is* the end of this yarn?"

Ah, here it is! so off we go again—and looked forward towards the rising moon, whose shining wake of glowworm-coloured light, sparkling in the small waves, that danced in the gentle wind on the heaving bosom of the dark blue sea, was right ahead of us, like a river of quicksilver with its course diminished in the distance to a point, flowing towards us, from the extreme verge of the horizon, through a rolling sea of ink, with the waters of which for a time it disdained to blend. Concentrated, and shining like polished silver afar off—intense and sparkling as it streamed down nearer, but becoming less and less brilliant as it widened on its approach to us, until, like the stream of the great Estuary of the Magdalena, losing itself in the salt waste of waters, it gradually melted beneath us and around us into the darkness.

I looked aloft—every object appeared sharply cut out against the dark firmament, and the swaying of the mast-heads to and fro, as the vessel rolled, was so steady and slow, that *they* seemed stationary, while it was the moon and stars which appeared to vibrate and swing from side to side, high over head, like the vascillation of the clouds in a theatre, when the scene is first let down.

The masts, and yards, and standing and running rigging, looked like black pillars, and bars, and wires of iron, reared against the sky, by some mighty spirit of the night; and the sails as the moon shone dimly through them, were as dark as if they had been tarpawlings. But when I walked forward, and looked

aft, what a beauteous change! Now each mast, with its gentle swelling canvass, the higher sails decreasing in size, until they tapered away nearly to a point, though topsail, topgallant-sails, royal and sky-sails, showed like towers of snow, and the cordage like silver threads, while each dark spar seemed to be of ebony, *fished* with ivory, as a flood of cold, pale, mild light streamed from the beauteous planet over the whole stupendous machine, lighting up the sand-white decks, on which the shadows of the men, and of every object that intercepted the moonbeams, were cast as strongly as if the planks had been inlaid with jet.

There was nothing moving about the decks. The lookouts, aft, and at the gangways, sat or stood like statues, half bronze, half alabaster. The old quartermaster, who was cunning the ship, and had perched himself on a carronade, with his arm leaning on the weather nettings, was equally motionless. The watch had all disappeared forward, or were stowed out of sight under the lee of the boats; the first Lieutenant, as if captivated by the serenity of the scene, was leaning with folded arms on the weather gangway, looking abroad upon the ocean, and whistling now and then either for a wind, or for want of thought. The only being who showed sign of life was the man at the wheel, and he scarcely moved, except now and then to give her a spoke or two, when the cheep of the tiller-rope, running through the well-greased leading flocks, would grate on the ear as a sound of some importance; while in daylight, in the ordinary bustle of the ship, no one could say he overheard it.

Three bells! "Keep a bright lookout there," sung out the Lieutenant. "Ay, ay, sir," from the four

lookout men, in a volley. Then from the weather-gangway, "All's well" rose shrill in the night air. The watchword was echoed by the man on the fore-castle, re-echoed by the lee-gangway lookout, and ending with the response of the man on the poop. My dream was dissipated—and so was the first Lieutenant's, who had but little poetry in his composition, honest man. "Fine night, Mr. Cringle. Look aloft, how beautifully set the sails are; that mizen topsail is well cut, eh? Sits well, don't it? But—confound the lubbers! Boatswain's mate, call the watch." Whi-whew, whi-whew, chirrup, chip, chip—the deck was alive in an instant, "as bees biz out wi' angry fyke." "Where is the captain of the mizen top?" growled the man in authority. "Here, sir."—"Here, sir!—look at the weather-clew of the mizen top-sail, sir,—look at that sail, sir,—how many *turns* can you count in that clew, sir? Spring it, you no-sailor you —spring it, and set the sail again."

How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable all this appeared to me at the time, I well remember; but the obnoxious *turns* were shaken out, and the sail set again so as to please even the fastidious eye of the Lieutenant, who, seeing nothing more to find fault with, addressed me once more, "Have had no grub since morning, Mr. Cringle; all the others are away in the prizes, you know; you are as good as one of us now, only want the order to join, you know—so will you oblige me, and take charge of the deck, until I go below and change my clothes, and gobble a bit?"

"Unquestionably,—with much pleasure."

He dived forthwith, and I walked aft a few steps to-

wards where the old quartermaster was standing on the gun.

"How is her head, Quartermaster?"

"South-east, and by south, sir. If the wind holds, we shall weather Morant Point, I think, sir."

"Very like, very like."

"What is that glancing backwards and forwards across that port-hole there, Quartermaster?"

"I told you so, Mafame," said the man; "what are you skylarking about the mizen chains for, man? —Come in, will you, come in."

The Captain's caution to his servant flashed on me.

"Come, in, my man, and give my respects to the Captain, and tell him that I am quite well now; the fresh air has perfectly restored me."

"I will, sir," said Mafame, half ashamed at being detected in his office of inspector-general of my actions; but the Doctor, to whom he had been sent, having now got a leisure moment from his labour in the shambles, came up, and made inquiries as to how I felt.

"Why, Doctor, I thought I was in for a fever half an hour ago, but it is quite gone off, or nearly so— there, feel my pulse."—It was regular, and there was no particular heat of skin.

"Why, I don't think there is much the matter with you. Mafame, tell the Captain so; but turn in, and take some rest as soon as you can, and I will see you in the morning—and here," feeling in his waistcoat pocket, "here are a couple of capers for you; take them now, will you?"—(And he handed me two blue pills, which I the next moment chucked overboard, to cure some bilious dolphin of the liver complaint.) I promised to do so whenever the Lieutenant relieved

the deck, which would, I made no question, be within half an hour.

"Very well, that will do—good-night. I am regularly done up myself," quoth the Medico, as he descended to the gun room.

At this time of night the prizes were all in a cluster under our lee-quarter, carrying every rag they could set, looking like small icebergs covered with snow. The Gleam was a good way astern, as if to whip them in, and to take care that no stray picaroon should make a dash at any of them. They looked like phantoms of the deep, every thing in the air and in the water was so still—I crossed to the lee-side of the deck to look at them—The Wave, seeing a person looking over the hammock-nettings, sheered close to, under the Firebrand's lee-quarter, and some one asked, "Do you want to speak us?" The man's voice, reflected from the concave surface of the schooner's mainsail, had a hollow, echoing sound that startled me.

"I should know that voice," said I to myself, "and that figure steering the schooner." The throbbing in my head and the dizzy feel, which had capsized my judgment in the cabin, again returned with increased violence—"It was no deception after all," thought I, "no cheat of the senses—I now believe such things are."

The same voice now called out, "Come away, Tom, come away," no doubt to some other seaman on board the little vessel, but my heated fancy did not so construe it. The cold breathless fit again overtook me, and I ejaculated, "God have mercy upon me a sinner!"

"Why don't you come, Tom?" said the voice once more.

It was Obed's. At this very instant of time, the Wave forged ahead into the Firebrand's shadow, so that her sails, but a moment before white as wool in the bright moonbeams, suffered a sudden eclipse, and became black as ink. "His dark spirit is there," said I, audibly, "and calls me—go I will, whatever may befall." I hailed the schooner, or rather I had only to speak, and that in a low tone, for she was now close under the counter—"Send your boat, for since *you* call, I know I *must* come."

A small canoe slid off her deck; two shipboys got into it, and pulled under the larboard mizen chains, which entirely concealed them, as they held on for a moment with a boat hook in the dark shadow of the ship. This was done so silently, that neither the lookout on the poop, who was rather on the weather side at the moment, nor the man at the lee-gangway, who happened to be looking out forward, heard them, or saw me, as I slipped down unperceived—"Pull back again, my lads; quick now, quick."

In a moment, I was alongside, the next I was on deck, and in this short space a change had come over the spirit of my dream, for I now was again conscious that I was on board the Wave with a prize crew. My imagination had taken another direction. "Now, Mr.——, I beg pardon, I forget your name," I had never heard it—"make more sail, and haul out from the fleet for Mancheoneal Bay; I have despatches for the Admiral—So, crack on."

The midshipman who was in charge of her never for an instant doubted but that all was right; sail

was made, and as the light breeze was the very thing for the little Wave, she began to *snore* through it like smoke. When we had shot a cable's length ahead of the Firebrand we kept away a point or two, so as to stand more in for the land, and, like most maniacs, I was inwardly exulting at the success of my manœuvre, when we heard the corvette's bell struck rapidly. Her main topsail was suddenly laid to the mast, whilst a loud voice echoed amongst the sails—"Any one see him in the waist—any body see him forward there?"

"No, sir, no."

"Afterguard, fire, and let go the life-buoy—lower away the quarter boats—jolly boat also."

We saw the flash, and presently the small blue light of the buoy, blazing and disappearing, as it rose and fell on the waves, in the corvette's wake, sailed away astern, sparkling fitfully, like an ignis fatuus. The cordage rattled through the davit blocks, as the boats plashed into the water—the splash of the oars was heard, and presently the twinkle of the life-buoy light was lost in the lurid glare of three blue lights, one being held aloft in each boat, in which the crews were standing up looking like spectres by the ghastly blaze, and anxiously peering about for some sign of the drowning man.

"A man overboard," was repeated from one to another of the prize crew.

"Sure enough," said I.

"Shall we stand back, sir?" said the midshipman.

"To what purpose?—there are enough there without us—no, no; crack on, we can do no good—carry on, carry on!"

We did so, and I now found severe shooting pains,

more racking than the sharpest rheumatism I had ever suffered, pervading my whole body. They increased until I suffered the most excruciating agony, as if my bones had been converted into red hot tubes of iron, and the marrow in them had been dried up with fervent heat, and I was obliged to beg that a hammock might be spread on deck, on which I lay down, pleading great fatigue and want of sleep as my excuse.

My thirst was unquenchable; the more I drank, the hotter it became. My tongue, and mouth, and throat, were burning, as if molten lead had been poured down into my stomach, while the most violent retching came on every ten minutes. The prize crew, poor fellows, did all they could—once or twice they seemed about standing back to the ship, but, "make sail, make sail," was my only cry. They did so, and there I lay without any thing between me and the wet planks but a thin sailor's blanket and the canvass of the hammock, through the livelong night, with no covering but a damp boat-cloak, raving at times during the hot fits, at others having my power of utterance frozen up during the cold ones. The men, once or twice, offered to carry me below, but the idea was horrible to me.

"No, no—not there—for heaven's sake, not there! If you do take me down, I am sure I shall see him, and the dead mate—No, no—overboard rather, throw me overboard rather."

Oh, what would I not have given for the luxury of a flood of tears!—But the fountains of mine eyes were dried up, and seared as with a red hot iron—my skin was parched, and hot, hot, as if every pore had been hermetically sealed; there was a hell within

me, and about me, as if the deck on which I lay had been steel at a white heat, and the gushing blood, as if under the action of a force-pump, throbbed through my head, as if it would have burst on my brain—and such a racking, splitting headach—no language can describe it, and yet ever and anon in the midst of this raging fire, this furnace at my heart, seventeen times heated, a sudden icy shivering chill would shake me, and pierce through and through me, even when the roasting fever was at the hottest.

At length the day broke on the long, long, moist, steamy night, and once more the sun rose to bless every thing but me. As the morning wore on, my torments increased with the heat, and I lay sweltering on deck, in a furious delirium, held down forcibly by two men, who were relieved by others every now and then, while I raved about Obed, and Paul, and the scenes I had witnessed on board during the chase, and in the attack. None of my rough but kind nurses expected I would have held on till nightfall; but shortly after sunset I became more collected, and, as I was afterwards told, whenever any little office was performed for me, whenever some drink was held to my lips, I would say to the gruff sun-burnt, black-whiskered,—square-shouldered topman, who might be my Ganymede for the occasion, "Thank you, Mary; Heaven bless your pale face, Mary; bless you, bless you!" It seemed my fancy had shaken itself clear of the fearful objects that had so pertinaciously haunted me before, and occupying itself with pleasing recollections, had produced a corresponding calm in the animal; but the poor fellow to whom I had expressed myself so endearingly was, I learned, most awfully put out and dismayed. He

twisted and turned his iron features into all manner of ludicrous combinations, under the laughter of his mates—"Now, Peter, may I be——but I would rather be shot at, than hear the poor young gentleman so quizz me in his madness." Then again—as I praised his lovely taper fingers—they were more like bunches of frosted carrots, dipped in a tar-bucket, with the tails snapped short off, where about an inch thick, *only*.

"My taper fingers—oh, Peter! I can't stomach this any longer—I'll give you my grog for the next two days, if you will take my spell here.—My taper fingers—murder!"

As the evening closed in, we saw the high land of Jamaica, but it was the following afternoon before we were off the entrance of Mancheoneal Bay. All this period, although it must have been one of great physical suffering, has ever, to my ethereal part, remained a dead blank. The first thing I remember afterwards, was being carried ashore in the dark in a hammock slung on two oars, so as to form a sort of rude palanquin, and laid down at a short distance from the overseer's house, where my troubles had originally commenced. I soon became perfectly sensible and collected, but I was so weak I could not speak; after resting a little, the men again lifted me and proceeded. The door of the dining-hall, which was the back entrance into the overseer's house, opened flush into the little garden through which we had come in—there were lights and sounds of music singing, and jovialty within. The farther end of the room, at the door of which I now rested, opened into the piazza, or open veranda, which crossed it at right angles, and constituted the front of the house, form-

ing, with this apartment, a figure somewhat like the letter T. I stood at the foot of the letter, as it were, and as I looked towards the piazza, which was gaily lit up, I could see it was crowded with male and female negroes, in their holiday apparel, with their wholesome clear brown-black skins, not *blue*-black, as they appear in our cold country, and beautiful white teeth, and sparkling black eyes, amongst whom were several gumbie-men and flute players, and John Canoes, as the negro Jack Pudding is called; the latter distinguishable by wearing white false faces, and enormous shocks of horsehair, fastened on to their woolly pates. Their character hovers somewhere between that of a harlequin and a clown, as they dance about, and thread through the negro groups, quizzing the women, and slapping the men; and at Christmas time, the grand negro carnival, they don't confine their practical jokes to their own colour, but take all manner of comical liberties with the whites, equally with their fellow bondsmen. The blackamoor visiters had suddenly, to all appearance, broken off their dancing, and were now clustered behind a rather remarkable group, who were seated at supper in the dining-room, near to where I stood, forming, as it were, the foreground in the scene. Mr. Fyall himself was there, and a rosy-gilled, happy-looking man, who I thought I had seen before; this much I could discern, for the light fell strong on them, and especially on the face of the latter, which shone like a star of the first magnitude, or a light-house in the red gleam—the usual family of the overseer, the book-keepers that is, and the worthy who had been the proximate cause of all my sufferings, the overseer himself, were there too, as if they had

all been sitting still at table where I saw them now, ever since I had left them—a fortnight before—at least my fancy did me the favour to annihilate, for the nonce, all intermediate time between the point of my departure on the night of the cooper's funeral, and the moment when I now re-visited them.

I was lifted out of the hammock, and supported to the door between two seamen. The fresh, nice-looking man before mentioned, Aaron Bang, esquire, by name, an incipient planting attorney in the neighbourhood, of great promise, was in the act of singing a song, for it was during some holiday-time, which had broken down the stiff observances of a Jamaica planter's life. There he sat, lolling back on his chair, with his feet upon the table, and a cigar, half consumed, in his hand. He had twisted up his mouth and mirth-provoking pimple of a nose, which, by an unaccountable control over some muscle, present in the visage of no other human being, he made to describe a small circle round the centre of his face, and slewing his head on one side, he was warbling, *ore rotundo*, some melodious ditty, with infinite complacency, and, to all appearance, to the great delight of his auditory; when his eyes lighted on me,—he was petrified in a moment,—I seemed to have blasted him,—his warbling ceased instantaneously,—the colour faded from his cheeks,—but there he sat, with open mouth, and in the same attitude as if he still sung, and I had suddenly become deaf, or as if he and his immediate compotators, and the group of blackies beyond, had all been on the instant turned to stone by a slap from one of their own John Canoes, I must have been in truth a terrible spectacle; my skin was yellow, not as saffron, but as the skin of a ripe lime; the *white*

of my eyes, to use an Irishism, ditto; my mouth and lips had festered and *broke out*, as we say in Scotland; my head was bound round with a napkin—none of the cleanest, you may swear; my dress was a pair of dirty duck trousers, and my shirt, with the boat cloak that had been my only counterpane on board of the little vessel, hanging from my shoulders.

Lazarus himself could scarcely have been a more appalling object, when the voice of him who spake as never man spake, said to him, "Lazarus, come forth."

I made an unavailing attempt to cross the threshold, but could not. I was spellbound, or there was an invisible barrier erected against me, which I could not overleap. The buzzing in my ears, the pain and throbbing in my head, and racking aches, once more bent me to the earth—ill and reduced as I was. A relapse, thought I; and I felt my judgment once more giving way before the sweltering fiend, who had retreated but for a moment to renew his attacks with still greater fierceness. The moment he once more entered into me—the instant that I was possessed—I cannot call it by any other name—an unnatural strength pervaded my shrunken muscles and emaciated frame, and I stepped boldly into the hall.—While I had stood at the door, listless and feeble as a child, and hanging, as it were, on the arms of the two topmen, after they had raised me from the hammock, the whole party had sat silently gazing at me, with their faculties paralyzed with terror. But now when I stamped into the room like the marble statue in Don Juan, and glared on them, my eyes sparkling with unearthly brilliancy, under the fierce distemper

which had anew thrust its red-hot fingers into my maw, and was at the moment seething my brain in its hellish caldron, the negroes in the piazza, one and all, men, women, and children, evanished into the night, and the whole party in the foreground started to their legs, as if they had been suddenly galvinized; the tables and chairs were overset, and whites and blacks trundled, and scrambled, and bundled over and over each other, neck and crop, as if the very devil had come to invite them to dinner in *propria personâ*, horns, tail and all. "Duppy, come! Duppy, come! Massa Tom Cringle ghost stand at for we door; we all shall be dead, oh—we all shall go dead, oh!" bellowed the father of gods, my old ally, Jupiter.

"That's an unco' awfu' sicht!" quoth the Scotch book-keeper."

"By the hockey, speak if you be a ghost, or I'll exercise [exorcise] ye wid this but of a musket," quoth the cow-boy—an Irishman to be sure, whose round bullet-head was discernible in the human mass, by his black, twinkling, half-drunken-looking eyes.

"Well-a-day," groaned another of them, a Welshman, I believe, with a face as long as my arm, and a drawl worthy of a methodist parson; "and what can it be—flesh and blood, it is not—can these dry bones have life in them?"

Ill as I was, however, I could perceive that all this row had now more of a tipsy frolic in it—whatever it might have had at first—than absolute fear; for the red-faced visiter, and Mr. Fyall, as if half ashamed, speedily extricated themselves from the chaos of chairs and living creatures, righted the table, re-

placed the candles, and having sat down, looking as grave as judges on the bench, Aaron Bang exclaimed —"I'll bet a dozen, it is the poor fellow himself returned on our hands, half-dead from the rascally treatment he has met with at the hands of these smuggling thieves!"

"Smugglers, or no," said Fyall, "you are right for once, my peony rose, I do believe."

But Aaron was a leetle staggered, notwithstanding, when I stumped towards him, as already described, and he shifted back and back as I advanced, with a most laughable cast of countenance, between jest and earnest, while Fyall kept shouting to him—"If it be his ghost, try him in Latin, Mr. Bang—speak Latin to him, Aaron Bang—nothing for a ghost like Latin, it is their mother tongue."

Bang, who it seemed plumed himself on his erudition, forthwith began—"Quæ maribus solum tribuunter."—Aaron's conceit of exorcising a spirit with the fag-end of an old grammar rule would have tickled me under most circumstances; but I was far past laughing. I had more cause, indeed, for crying. I made another step. He hitched his chair back. "Bam, Bo, Rem!" shouted the incipient planting attorney. Another hitch, which carried him clean out of the supper-room, and across the narrow piazza; but, in this last movement, he made a regular false step, the two back-feet of his chair dropping over the first step of the front stairs, whereupon he lost his balance, and toppling over, vanished in a twinkling, and rolled down half a dozen steps, heels over head, until he lay sprawling on the manger or mule-trough before the door, where the *beastesses* are fed under Busha's own eye on all estates; for this excellent and

most cogent reason, that the maize or guinea-corn, belonging of right to poor *mulo*, would generally go towards improving the condition, not of the quadruped, but of the biped Quashie, who had charge of him; and there he lay in a convulsion of laughter.

The two seamen, who supported me between them, were at first so completely dumbfounded by all this, that they could not speak. At length, however, old Timothy Tailtackle lost his patience, and found his tongue. "This may be Jamaica frolic, good gentlemen, and all very comical in its way; but, d—n me, if it be either gentlemanlike or Christianlike, to be after funning and fudding, while a fellow-creature, and his Majesty's commissioned officer to boot, stands before you, all but dead of one of your blasted fevers."

The honest fellow's straight-forward appeal, far from giving offence to the kind-hearted people to whom it was made, was not only taken in good part, but Mr. Fyall himself took the lead in setting the whole household immediately to work, to have me properly cared for. The best room in the house was given up to me. I was carefully shifted and put to bed; but during all that night and the following day, I was raving in a furious fever, so that I had to be forcibly held down in my bed, sometimes for half an hour at a time.

* * * * * * * *

I say, messmate, have you ever had the yellow fever, the *vomito prieto*, black vomit, as the Spaniards call it?—No?—Have you ever had a bad bilious fever then? No bad bilious fever either?—Why, then, you are a most *mis*fortunate creature; for you have

never known what it was to be in heaven, nor eke the other place. Oh, the delight, the blessedness of the languor of recovery, when one finds himself in a large airy room, with a dreamy indistinct recollection of great past suffering, endured in a small miserable vessel within the tropics, where you have been roasted one moment by the vertical rays of the sun, and the next annealed hissing hot by the salt sea spray, and in a broad luxurious bed, some cool sunny morning, with the fresh sea-breeze whistling through the open windows that look into the piazza, rustling the folds of the clean wire gauze musquito net that serves you for bed-curtains; while beyond you look forth into the cool sequestered court-yard, overshadowed by one vast umbrageous Kennip tree, making every thing look green and cool and fresh beneath, and whose branches the rushing wind is rasping cheerily on the shingles of the roof—and oh, how passing sweet is the lullaby from the humming of numberless glancing bright-hued flies, of all sorts and sizes, sparkling among the green leaves like chips of a prism, and the fitful whining of the fairy-flitting humming-bird, now here, now there, like winged gems, and living "atoms of the rainbow," round which their tiny wings, moving too quickly to be visible, formed little haloes, and the palm-tree at the house-corner is shaking its long hard leaves, making a sound for all the world like the pattering of rain; and the orange-tree top, with ripe fruit, and green fruit, and white blossoms, is waving to and fro flush with the window sill, dashing the fragrant odour into your room, at every *whish;* and the double jessamine is twining up the papaw, (whose fruit, if rubbed on a bull's hide, immediately converts it into a

tender beefsteak,) and absolutely stifling you with sweet perfume; and then the sangaree—old Madeira, two parts of water, no more, and nutmeg—and not a taste out of a thimble, but a rummerfull of it, my boy, that would drown your first-born at his christening, if he slipped into it, and no stinting in the use of this ocean; on the contrary, the tidy old brown nurse, or mayhap a buxom young one, at your bedside, with ever and anon a "leetle more panada," (d—n panada, I had forgotten that!) "and den some more sangaree; it will do massa good, trenthen him tomack"—and—but I am out of breath, and must lie to for a brief space.

I opened my eyes late in the morning of the second day after landing, and saw Mr. Fyall and the excellent Aaron Bang sitting one on each side of my bed. Although weak as a sucking infant, I had a strong persuasion on my mind that all danger was over, and that I was convalescent. I had no feverish symptom whatsoever. I felt cool and comfortable, with a fine balmy moisture on my skin; but I spoke with great difficulty.

Aaron noticed this. "Don't exert yourself too much, Tom; take it coolly, man, and be thankful that you are now fairly round the corner. Is your head painful?"

"No—why should it?" Mr. Fyall smiled, and I put up my hand—it was all I could do, for my limbs appeared loaded with lead at the extremities, and when I touched any part of my frame, with my hand for instance, there was no concurring sensation conveyed by the nerves of the two parts; sometimes I felt as if touched by the hand of another, at others, as if I had touched the person of some one else. When I raised

my hand to my forehead, my fingers instinctively moved to take hold of my hair, for I was in no small degree proud of some luxuriant brown curls, which the women used to praise. Alas and alack-a-day! in place of ringlets, glossy with Macassar oil, I found a cool young tender plaintain leaf, bound round my temples.

"What is all this?" said I. "A *kail-blade*, where my hair used to be!"

"How came this kail-blade here, and how came it here?" sung friend Bang, laughing, for he had great *powers of laughter*, and I saw he kept his quizzical face turned towards some object at the head of the bed, which I could not see.

"You may say that, Aaron—where's my wig, you rogue, eh?"

"Never mind, Tom," said Fyall; "your hair will soon grow again, won't it, miss?"

"Miss! miss!" and I screwed my neck round, and lo! "Ah, Mary, and are you the Delilah who have shorn my locks—you wicked young female lady, you?" She smiled and nodded to Aaron, who was a deuced favourite with the ladies, *black*, brown, and white, (I give the *pas* to the staple of the country—hope no offence,) as well as with every one else who ever knew him. "How dare you, friend Bang, shave and blister my head, you dog?" said I—"You cannibal Indian, you have scalped me; you are a regular Mohawk." The sight of my cousin's lovely face, and the heavenly music of her tongue, made me so forgiving, that I could be angry with no one. At this moment, a nice-looking elderly man slid into the room as noiselessly as a cat.

"How are you, Lieutenant? Why, you are posi-

tively gay this morning! Preserve me—why have you taken off the dressing from your head?"

"Preserve me—you may say that, Doctor—why, you seem to have preserved me, and pickled me after a very remarkable fashion, certainly! Why, man, did you intend to make a mummy of me, with all your swathings? Now, what is that crackling on my chest? More plantain leaves, as I live!"

"Only another blister, sir."

"Only *another* blister—and my feet—Zounds! what have you been doing with my feet? The soles are as tender as if I had been bastinadoed."

"Only cataplasms, sir; mustard and bird-pepper poultices—nothing more."

"Mustard and bird-pepper poultices!—and, pray, what is that long fiddle-case supported on two chairs in the piazza?"

"What case?" said the good Doctor, and his eye followed mine. "Oh, my gun-case. I am a great sportsman, you must know—but draw down that blind, Mr. Bang, if you please—the breeze is too strong."

"Gun-case! I would rather have taken it for your *game*-box, Doctor. However, thanks be to Heaven, you have not *bagged* me this bout."

At this moment, I heard a violent scratching and jumping on the roof of the house, and presently a loud croak, and a strong rushing noise, as of a large bird taking flight—"What is that, Doctor?"

"The devil," said he laughing, "at least your evil genius, Lieutenant—it is the carrion crows, the large John-Crows, as they are called, flying away. They have been holding a council of war upon you, since early dawn, expecting (I may tell you, now you

are so well) that it might likely soon turn into a coroner's inquest."

"John Crow! Coroner's inquest!—Cool shavers those West India chaps, after all!" muttered I; and again I lay back, and offered up my heart-warm thanks to the Almighty, for his great mercy to me a sinner.

My aunt and cousin had been on a visit in the neighbourhood; and over-night Mr. Fyall had kindly sent for them to receive my last sigh, for to all appearance I was fast going. Oh, the gratitude of my heart, the tears of joy I wept in my weak blessedness, and the overflowing of heart that I experienced towards that almighty and ever-merciful Being who had spared me and brought me out of my great sickness, to look round on dear friends, and on the idol of my heart, once more, after all my grievous sufferings! I took Mary's hand—I could not raise it for lack of strength, or I would have kissed it; but, as she leant over me, Fyall came behind her and gently pressed her sweet lips to mine, while the dear girl blushed as red as Aaron Bang's face. By this time my aunt herself had come into the room, and added her warm congratulations, and last, although not least, Timothy Tailtackle made his appearance in the piazza at the window, with a clean, joyful, well-shaven countenance. He grinned, turned his quid, pulled up his trousers, smoothed down his hair with his hand, and gave a sort of half-tipsy shamble, meant for a bow, as he entered the bedroom.

"You have forereached on Davy this time, sir. Heaven be praised for it! He was close aboard of you, howsomdever, sir, once or twice." Then he bowed round the room again, with a sort of swing or caper,

whichever you choose to call it, as if *he* had been the party obliged.

"Kind folks these, sir," he continued, in what was meant for *sotto voce*, and for my ear alone, but it was more like the growling of a mastiff puppy than any thing else. "Kind folks, sir—bad as their mountebanking looked the first night, sir—why, bless your honour, may they make a marine of me, if they han't set a Bungo to wait on us, Bill and I that is—and we has grog more than does us good—and grub, my eye!—only think, sir—Bill and Timothy Tailtackle waited on by a black Bungo!" and he doubled himself up, chuckling, and hugging himself, with infinite glee.

"All now went merrily as a marriage bell." I was carefully conveyed to Kingston, where I rallied, under my aunt's hospitable roof, as rapidly almost as I had sickened, and, within a fortnight, all bypast strangenesses explained to my superiors, I at length occupied my berth, in the Firebrand's gun-room, as third lieutenant of the ship.

CHAPTER XIV.

SCENES IN JAMAICA.

THE malady, from whose fangs I had just escaped, was at this time making fearful ravages amongst the troops and white inhabitants of Jamaica generally; nor was the squadron exempted from the afflicting visitation, although it suffered in a smaller degree.

I had occasion at this time to visit Uppark camp, a military post about a mile and a half from Kingston, where two regiments of infantry, and a detachment of artillery were stationed.

In the forenoon, I walked out in company with an officer, a relation of my own, whom I had gone to visit; enjoying the fresh sea breeze that whistled past us in half a gale of wind, although the sun was vertical, and shining into the bottom of a pint-pot, as the sailors have it.

The barracks were built on what appeared to me a very dry situation, (although I have since heard it alleged, that there was a swamp to windward of it, over which the sea breeze blew, but this I did not see,) considerably elevated above the hot sandy plain on which Kingston stands, and sloping gently towards the sea. They were splendid, large, airy, two-story buildings, well raised off the ground on brick pillars,

so that there was a perfectly free ventilation of air between the surface of the earth and the floor of the first story, as well as through the whole of the upper rooms. A large balcony, or piazza, ran along the whole of the south front, both above and below, which shaded the brick shell of the house from the sun, and afforded a cool and convenient lounge for the men. The out-houses of all kinds were well thrown back into the rear, so that in front there was nothing to intercept the sea breeze. The officers' quarters stood in advance of the men's barracks, and were, as might be expected, still more comfortable; and, in front of all, were the field officers' houses, all of substantial brick and mortar. The whole of this superb establishment stood in an extensive lawn, not surpassed in beauty by any nobleman's park that I had ever seen. It was immediately after the rains when I visited it; the grass was luxuriant and newly cut, and the trees which grew in detached clumps, were most magnificent. We clambered up into one of them, a large umbrageous wild cotton tree, which cast a shadow on the ground—the sun being, as already mentioned, right overhead—of thirty paces in diameter; but still it was but a dwarfish plant of its kind, for I have measured others whose gigantic shadows, at the same hour, were upwards of one hundred and fifty feet in diameter, and their trunks, one in particular, that overhangs the Spanish town road, twenty feet through of *solid* timber; that is, not including the enormous spurs that shoot out like buttresses, and end in strong twisted roots, that strike deep into the earth, and form stays, as it were, to the tree in all directions.

Our object, however, in the present expedition, was, not so much to admire the charms of nature, as

to enjoy the luxury of a real Havannah cigar, in solitary comfort; and a glorious perch we had selected. The shade was grateful beyond measure. The fresh breeze was rushing, almost roaring through the leaves and groaning branches, and every thing around was green, and fragrant, and cool, and delicious; by comparison that is, for the thermometer would, I dare say, have still vouched for eighty degrees. The branches overhead were alive with a variety of beautiful lizards, and birds of the gayest plumage;—amongst others, a score of small chattering green paroquets were hopping close to us, and playing at bo-peep from the lower surfaces of the leaves of the wild pine, (a sort of Brobdignag parasite, that grows, like the mistletoe, in the clefts of the larger trees,) to which they clung, as green and shining as the leaves themselves, and ever and anon popping over their little heads and shoulders to peep at us; while the red-breasted woodpecker kept drumming on every hollow part of the bark, for all the world like old Kelson, the carpenter of the Torch, tapping along the topsides for the dry rot. All around us the men were lounging about in the shade, and sprawling on the grass in their foraging caps and light jackets, with an officer here and there lying reading, or sauntering about, bearding Phœbus himself, to watch for a shot at a swallow, as it skimmed past; while goats and horses, sheep and cattle, were browsing the fresh grass, or sheltering themselves from the heat beneath the trees. All nature seemed alive and happy—a little drowsy from the heat or so, but that did not much signify—when two carts, each drawn by a mule, and driven by a negro, approached the tree where we were perched. A solitary sergeant

accompanied them, and they appeared, when a bow-shot distant, to be loaded with white deal boxes.

I paid little attention to them until they drove under the tree. "I say, Snowdrop," said the non-commissioned officer, "where be them black rascals, them pioneers—where is the *fateague* party, my Lily-white, who ought to have had the trench dug by this time?"

"Dere now," grumbled the negro, "dere now—easy ting to deal wid white gentleman, but devil cannot satisfy dem worsted sash." Then aloud—"Me no know, sir—me can't tell—no for me business to dig hole—I only carry what you fill him up wid;" and the vampire, looking over his shoulder, cast his eye towards his load, and grinned until his white teeth glanced from ear to ear.

"Now," said the Irish sergeant, "I could *brain* you, but it is not worth while!"—I question if he could, however, knowing as I did the thickness of their sculls.—"Ah, here they come!"—and a dozen half-drunken, more than half-naked, bloated, villanous-looking blackamoors, with shovels and pick-axes on their shoulders, came along the road, laughing and singing most lustily. They passed beneath where we sat, and, when about a stonecast beyond, they all jumped into a trench or pit, which I had not noticed before, about twenty feet long, by eight wide. It was already nearly six feet deep, but it seemed they had instructions to sink it farther, for they first plied their pick-axes, and then began to shovel out the earth.—When they had completed their labour, the sergeant, who had been superintending their operations, returned to where the carts were still standing beneath the tree. One of them had *six coffins in it*, with the

name of the tenant of each, and number of his company, marked in red chalk on the smallest end.

"I say, Snowdrop," said the sergeant, "how do you come to have only five bodies, when Cucumbershin there has six?"

"To be sure I hab no more as five, and weight enough too. You no see Corporal Bumblechops dere? You knows how big he was."

"Well, but where is Sergeant Heavystern? why did you not fetch him away with the others?"

The negro answered doggedly, "Massa Sergeant, you should remember dem no die of consumption—cough you call him—nor fever and ague, nor any ting dat waste dem—for tree day gone—no more—all were mount guard, tout and fat; so as for Sergeant Heavystern, him left in de dead-house at de hospital."

"I guessed as much, you dingy tief,"—said the Sergeant,—"but I will break your bones, if you don't give me a sufficing *rason*, *why* you left him"—And he approached Snowdrop, with his cane raised in the act to strike.

"Stop, Massa," shouted the negro; "me will tell you—Dr. Plaget desire dat Heavystern should be leave."

"Confound Dr. Plaget!"—and he smote the pioneer across the pate, whereby he broke his stick, although, as I anticipated, without much hurting his man—but the Sergeant instantly saw his error, and with the piece of the baton he gave Snowdrop a tap on the shin-bone, that set him pirouetting on one leg, with the other in his hand, like a teetotum.

"Why, sir, did you not bring as many as Cucumbershin, sir?"

"Becaase"—screamed Snowdrop, in great wrath,

now all alive and kicking from the smart—"Becaase Cucumbershin is loaded wid light infantry, sir, and all of mine are grenadier, Massa Sergeant—dat dem good reason surely!"

"No, it is not, sir; go back and fetch Heavystern immediately, or by the powers but I will"——

"Massa Sergeant, you must be mad—Dr. Plaget—you won't yeerie—but him say, five grenadier—especially with Corporal Bumblechop for one—is good load—ay, wery tif load—equal to seven tallion company (battalion, I presume,) and more better load, great deal, den six light infantry—beside him say, tell Sergeant Pivot to send you back at five in de afternoon wid four more coffin, by which time he would have anoder load, and in trute de load was ready prepare in de dead-house before I come away, only *dem were not well cold just yet.*"

I was mightily shocked at all this—but my chum took it very coolly.—He slightly raised one side of his mouth, and, giving a knowing wink with his eye, lighted a fresh cigar, and continued to puff away with all the composure in the world.

At length the forenoon wore away, and the bugles sounded for dinner, when we adjourned to the mess-room. It was a very large and handsome saloon, standing alone in the lawn, and quite detached from all the other buildings, but the curtailed dimensions of the table in the middle of it, and the ominous crowding together of the regimental plate, like a show-table in Rundle and Bridge's back-shop, gave startling proofs of the ravages of the "pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noon-day;" for although the whole regiment was in barracks, there were only *nine* covers laid, one of

which was for me. The lieutenant-colonel, the major, and I believe fifteen other officers, had already been gathered to their fathers, within four months from the day on which the regiment landed from the transports. Their warfare was o'er, and they slept well. At the first, when the insidious disease began to creep on apace, and to evince its deadly virulence, all was dismay and anxiety—downright, slavish, unmanly fear, even amongst case-hardened veterans, who had weathered the whole peninsular war, and finished off with Waterloo.—The next week passed over—the mortality increasing, but the dismay decreasing—and so it wore on, until it reached its horrible climax, at the time I speak of, by which period there was absolutely no dread at all. A reckless gaiety had succeeded—not the screwing up of one's courage for the nonce, to mount a breach, or to lay an enemy's frigate aboard, where the substratum of fear is present, but cased over by an energetic exertion of the will; but an unnatural light-heartedness, for which account, ye philosophers, for I cannot—and this, too, amongst men who were as steel in the field, yet whenever a common cold overtook them in quarters, or a small twinge of rheumatic pain, would, under other circumstances, have caudled and beflannelled themselves, and bored you for your sympathy, at *no allowance*, as they say. The major elect, that is, the senior captain, was in the chair; as for the lieutenant-colonel's vacancy, that was too high an aspiration for any man in the regiment. A stranger of rank, and interest, and money, would of course get that step, for the two deaths in the regimental staff made but one captain a major, as my neighbour on the left hand feelingly remarked. All was

fun and jovialty; we had a capital dinner, and no allusion whatever, direct or indirect, was made to the prevailing mortal epidemic, until the surgeon came in, about eight o'clock in the evening.

"Sit down, doctor," said the president—"take some wine; can recommend the Madeira,—Claret but so, so—your health." The doctor bowed, and soon became as happy and merry as the rest; so we carried on, until about ten o'clock, when the lights began to waltz a little, and propagate also, and I found I had got enough, or, peradventure, a little more than enough, when the senior captain rose, and walked very composedly out of the room—but I noticed him pinch the doctor's shoulder as he passed.

The *Medico* thereupon stole quietly after him; but we did not seem to miss either—a young sub had usurped the deserted throne, and there we were all once more in full career, singing and bousing, and cracking bad jokes to our hearts' content. By-and-by, in comes the doctor once more.

"Doctor," quoth young sub, take some wine; can't recommend the Maderia this time," mimicking his predecessor very successfully; "the claret, you know, has been condemned, but a little hot brandy and water, eh?"

The doctor once more bowed his pate, made his hot stuff, and volunteered a song.—After he had finished, and we had all hammered on the table to his honour and glory, until every thing danced again, as if it had been a matter of very trivial concern, he said, "Sorry I was away so long; but old Spatterdash has got a d—d thick skin, I can tell you—could scarcely get the lancet into him—I thought I should have had to send for a spring phleem—to tip him the

veterinary, you know—and he won't take physic: so I fear he will have but a poor chance."

Spatterdash was no other than mine host who had just vacated!

"What, do you really think he is in for it?" said the second oldest captain, who sat next me; and as he spoke he drew his leg from beneath the table, and, turning out his dexter heel, he seemed to contemplate the site of the prospective fixed spur.

"I do indeed," quoth Dr. Plaget. *He died within three days!*

But as I do not intend to write an essay on yellow fever, I will make an end, and get on shipboard as fast as I can, after stating one strong fact, authenticated to me by many unimpeachable witnessess. It is this; that this dreadful epidemic, or contagious fever—call it which you will—has never appeared, or been propagated at or beyond an altitude of 3000 feet above the level of the sea, although people seized with it on the hot sultry plains, and removed thither, have unquestionably died. In a country like Jamaica, with a range of lofty mountains far exceeding this height, intersecting the island through nearly its whole length, might not government, after satisfying themselves of the truth of the fact, improve on the hint? Might not a main guard suffice in Kingston, for instance, while the regiments were in quarters half-way up the Liguana Mountains, within twelve miles' actual distance from the town, and within view of it, so that during the day, by a semaphore on the mountain, and another at the barrack of the outpost, a constant and instantaneous communication could be kept up, and, if need were, by lights in the night?

The admiral, for instance, had a semaphore in the

stationary flag-ship at Port-Royal, which communicated with another at his *Pen*, or residence, near Kingston; and this again rattled off the information to the mountain retreat, where he occasionally retired to careen; and it is fitting to state, also, that in all the mountain districts of Jamaica which I visited, there is abundance of excellent water and plenty of fuel. These matters are worth consideration, one would think; however, *allons*—it is no business of Tom Cringle's.

Speaking of telegraphing, I will relate an anecdote here, if you will wait until I mend my pen. I had landed at Greenwich wharf on duty—this was the nearest point of communication between Port-Royal and the admiral's pen—where, finding the flag-lieutenant, he drove me up in his ketureen to lunch. While we were regaling ourselves, the old signal man came into the piazza, and with several most remarkable obeisances, gave us to know that there were flags hoisted on the signal mast, at the mountain settlement, of which he could make nothing—the uppermost was neither the interrogative, the affirmative, nor the negative, nor in fact any thing that with the book he could make sense of. "Odd enough," said the lieutenant; "hand me the glass," and he peered away for half a minute. "Confound me if I can make heads or tails of it either: there, Cringle, what do you think? How do you construe it?" I took the telescope. Uppermost there was hoisted on the signal-mast a large table-cloth, not altogether immaculate, and under it a towel, as I guessed, for it was too opaque for bunting, and too white, although I could not affirm that it was fresh out of the fold, neither.

"I am puzzled," said I, as I spied away again. Meanwhile there was no acknowledgment made at

our semaphore—"There, down they go," I continued—"Why, it must be a mistake—Stop, here's a new batch going up above the green trees—There goes the table-cloth once more, and the towel, and—— deuce take me, if I can compare the lowermost to any thing but a dishclout—why, it must be a dishclout."

The flags, or substitutes for them, streamed another minute in the breeze, but as there was still no answer made from our end of the string, they were once more hauled down—We waited another minute —"Why, here goes the same signal up again, table-cloth, towel, dishclout, and all—What the *diable* have we got here? A red ball, two pennants under—What can that mean?—Ball—it is the *bonnet-rouge*, or I am a Dutchman, with two short streamers"—Another look—"A red night-cap and a pair of stockings, by all that is portentous!" exclaimed I.

"Ah, I see, I see!" said the lieutenant, laughing —"signal-man, acknowledge it."

It was done and down came all the flags in a trice. It appeared, on inquiry, that the washing cart, which ought to have been sent up that morning, had been forgotten; and the Admiral and his secretary having ridden out, there was no one who could make the proper signal for it. So the old housekeeper took this singular method of having the cart despatched, and it was sent off accordingly.

For the first week after I entered on my new office, I was busily engaged on board; during which time my mind was quite made up, that the most rising man in his Majesty's service, beyond all compare, was Lieutenant Thomas Cringle, third of the Firebrand. During this eventful period I never addressed

a note to any friend on shore, or to a brother officer, without writing in the left-hand lower corner of the envelope, "Lieutenant Cringle," and clapping three dashing, &c. &c. &c.'s below the party's name for whom it was intended.

"Must let 'em know that an officer of *my* rank in the service knows somewhat of the courtesies of life, eh?"

In about ten days, however, we had gotten the ship into high order and ready for sea, and now the glory and honour of command, like my *only* epaulet, that had been soaked while on duty in one or two showers, and afterwards regularly bronzed in the sun, began to tarnish, and lose the new gloss, like every thing else in this weary world. It was about this time, while sitting at breakfast in the gun-room one fine morning, with the other officers of our mess, gossiping about I hardly remember what, that we heard the Captain's voice on deck.

"Call the first Lieutenant."

"He is at breakfast, sir," said the man, whoever he might have been, to whom the order was addressed.

"Never mind then—Here, boatswain's mate—Pipe away the men who were captured in the boats; tell them to clean themselves, and send Mr. * * * to me"—(This was the officer who had been taken prisoner along with them in the first attack) "they are wanted in Kingston at the trial to-day.—Stop—tell Mr. Cringle also to get ready to go in the gig."

The pirates, to the amount of forty-five, had been transferred to Kingston jail some days previously, preparatory to their trial, which, as above mentioned, was fixed for this day.

We pulled cheerily up to Kingston, and landing at the Wherry wharf, marched along the hot dusty streets, under a broiling sun, Captain N——, the other Lieutenant, and myself, in full puff, leading the van, followed by about fourteen seamen, in white straw hats, with broad black ribands, and clean white frocks and trousers, headed by a boatswain's mate, with his silver whistle hung round his neck. As respectable a tail as any Christian could desire to swinge behind him, and, man for man, I would willingly have perilled my promotion upon their walloping, with no offensive weapons but their stretchers, the *following*, claymores and all, of any proud, disagreeable, would-be-mighty mountaineer, that ever turned up his supercilious, whiskey-blossomed snout at Bailie Jarvie. On they came, square-shouldered, narrow-flanked, tall, strapping fellows, tumbling and rolling about the piazzas in knots of three and four, until, at the corner of King Street, they came bolt up upon a well-known large, fat brown lady, famous for her manufacture of spruce-beer.

"Avast, avast a bit"—sung out one of the topmen —"let the nobs have a-head, will ye, and let's have a pull."

"Here, old mother Slush," sung out another of the cutter's crew—"Hand us up a dozen bottles of spruce, do you hear?"

"Dozen battle of pruce!" groaned the old woman: "who shall pay me?"

"Why, do you think the Firebrands are thieves, you old canary, you!"

"How much, eh?" said the boatswain's mate.

"Twelve feepennies," quoth the matron.

"Oh, ah!" said one of the men—"Twelve times

five is half a crown; there's a dollar for you, old mother Popandchokem—now give me back five shillings."

"Eigh, oh!" whined out the spruce merchant; "you dem rascal, who tell you dat your dollar more wort den any one else money—eh? How can give you back five shilling and keep back twelve feepenny—eh?"

The culprit who had stood the Cocker of the company, had by this time gained his end, which was to draw the fat damsel a step or two from the large tub half full of water, where the bottles were packed, and to engage her attention by stirring up her bile, or *corruption*, as they call it in Scotland, while his messmates instantly seized the opportunity, and a bottle a-piece also, and, as I turned round to look for them, there they were all in a circle taking the meridian altitude of the sun, or as if they had been taking aim at the pigeons on the eaves of the houses above them with Indian moth-tubes.

They then replaced the bottles in the tub, paid the woman more than she asked; but, by way of taking out the change, they chucked her stern foremost into the water amongst her merchandise, and then shouldered the vessel, old woman and all, and away they staggered with her, the empty bottles clattering together in the water, and the old lady swearing and bouncing and squattering amongst them, while Jack shouted to her to hold her tongue, or they would let her go by the run bodily. Thus they stumped in the wake of their captain, until he arrived at the door of the court-house, to the great entertainment of the bystanders, cutting the strings that confined the corks

of the stone bottles as they bowled along, popping the spruce into each other's faces, and the faces of the negroes, as they ran out of the stores to look at Jack in his frolic, and now and then taking a shot at the old woman's cookernony itself, as she was held kicking and spurring high above their heads.

At length the captain, who was no great way ahead, saw what was going on, which was the signal for dousing the whole affair, spruce-woman, tub, and bottles, and the party gathering themselves up, mustered close aboard of us, as grave as members of the General Assembly.

The regular court-house of the city being under repair, the Admiralty Sessions were held in a large room occupied temporarily for the purpose. At one end, raised two steps above the level of the floor, was the bench, on which were seated the judge of the Admiralty Court, supported by two post-captains in full uniform, who are ex-officio judges of this court in the colonies, one on each side. On the right, the jury, composed of merchants of the place, and respectable planters of the neighbourhood, were enclosed in a sort of box, with a common white pine railing separating it from the rest of the court. There was a long table in front of the bench, at which a lot of black-robed devils, limbs of lawyers, were ranged—but both amongst them, and on the bench, the want of the cauliflower wigs were sorely felt by me, as well as by the seamen, who considered it little less than murder, that men in crops—black shock-pated fellows—should sit in judgment on their fellow-creatures, where life and death were in the scales.

On the left hand of the bench, the motley public—white, black, and of every intermediate shade—were

grouped; as also in front of the dock, which was large. It might have been made with a view to the possibility of fifteen unfortunates or so, being arranged at one time; but now there were no fewer than forty-three jammed and pegged together into it, like sheep in a Smithfield pen in the evening before market-day. These were the *forty thieves*—the pirates. They were all, without exception, clean, well shaven, and decently rigged in white trousers, linen or check shirts, and held their broad Panama sombreros in their hands.

Most of them wore the red silk sash round the waist. They had generally large bushy whiskers, and not a few had ear-rings of massive gold, (why call wearing ear-rings puppyism? Shakspeare wore ear-rings, or the Chandos portrait lies,) and chains of the same metal round their necks, supporting, as I concluded, a crucifix, hid in the bosom of the shirt.—A Spaniard can't murder a man comfortably, if he has not his crucifix about him.

They were, collectively, the most daring, intrepid, Salvator Rosa-looking men I had ever seen. Most of them were above the middle size, and the spread of their shoulders, and the grace with which their arms were hung, and finely developed muscles of the chest and neck, the latter exposed completely by the folding back of their shirt-collars, cut large and square, after the Spanish fashion, beat the finest boat's crew we could muster all to nothing. Some of them were of mixed blood, that is, the cross between the European Spaniard and the aboriginal Indian of Cuba, a race long since sacrificed on the altar of Mammon, the white man's god.

Their hair, generally speaking, was long, and

curled over the forehead, black and glossy, or hung down to their shoulders in ringlets, that a dandy of the second Charles' time would have given his little finger for. The forehead in most was high and broad, and of a clear olive, the nose straight, springing boldly from the brow, the cheeks oval, and the mouth—every Spaniard has a beautiful mouth, until he spoils it with the beastly cigar, as far as his well-formed firm lips can be spoiled; but his teeth he generally does destroy early in life. Take the whole, however, and deduct for the teeth, I had never seen so handsome a set of men; and I am sure no woman, had she been there, would have gainsayed me. They stood up, and looked forth upon their judges, and the jury like brave men, desperadoes though they were. They were, without exception, calm and collected, as if aware that they had small chance of escape, but still determined not to give that chance away. One young man especially attracted my attention, from the bold, cool self-possession of his bearing. He was in the very front of the dock, and dressed in no way different from the rest, so far as his under garments were concerned, unless it were that they were of a finer quality. He wore a short green velvet jacket, profusely studded with knobs and chains, like small chain-shot, of solid gold, similar to the shifting button lately introduced by our dandies in their waistcoats. It was not put on, but hung on one shoulder, being fastened across his breast by the two empty sleeves tied together in a knot. He also wore the red silk sash, through which a broad gold cord ran twining like the strand of a rope. He had no ear-rings, but his hair was the most beautiful I had ever seen in a male—long and black,

jet-black and glossy. It was turned up and fastened in a club on the crown of his head with a large pin, I should rather say skewer, of silver; but the outlandishness of the fashion was not offensive, when I came to take into the account the beauty of the plaiting, and of the long raven lovelocks that hung down behind each of his small transparent ears, and the short Hyperion-like curls that clustered thick and richly on his high, pale, broad forehead. His eyes were large, black, and swimming, like a woman's; his nose straight and thin; and such a mouth, such an under-lip, full and melting; and teeth regular and white, and utterly free from the pollution of tobacco; and a beautifully moulded small chin, rounding off, and merging in his round, massive, muscular neck.

I had never seen so fine a face, such perfection of features, and such a clear, dark, smooth skin. It was a finer face than Lord Byron's, whom I had seen more than once, and wanted that hellish curl of the lip; and, as to figure, he could, to look at him, at any time, have eaten up his lordship stoop and roop, to his breakfast. It was the countenance, in a word, of a most beautiful youth, melancholy, indeed, and anxious—evidently anxious; for the large pearls that coursed each other down his forehead and cheek, and the slight quivering of the under lip, every now and then evinced the powerful struggle that was going on within. His figure was, if possible, superior to his face. It was not quite filled up, *set*, as we call it, but the arch of his chest was magnificent, his shoulders square, arms well put on; but his neck—"Have you seen the Apollo, neighbour?"—"No, but the cast of it, at Somerset House."—"Well, that will do, so you know the sort of neck he had." His waist

was fine, hips beautifully moulded; and although his under limbs were shrouded in his wide trousers, they were evidently of a piece with what was seen and developed; and this was vouched for by the turn of his ankle and well-shaped foot, on which he wore a small Spanish grass slipper, fitted with great nicety. He was at least six feet two in height, and such as I have described him. There he stood, with his two hands grasping the rail before him, and looking intently at a wigless lawyer, who was opening the accusation, while he had one ear turned a little towards the sworn interpreter of the court, whose province it was, at every pause, to explain to the prisoners what the learned gentleman was stating. From time to time he said a word or two to a square-built, dark, ferocious-looking man standing next him, apparently about forty years of age, who, as well as his fellow-prisoners, appeared to pay him great respect; and I could notice the expression of their countenances change as his rose or fell.

The indictment had been read before I came in, and, as already mentioned, the lawyer was proceeding with his accusatory speech, and, as it appeared to me, the young Spaniard had some difficulty in understanding the interpreter's explanation. Whenever he saw me, he exclaimed, "Ah-aqui viene el Senor Teniente —ahora—sabremos—ahora ahora;" and he beckoned to me to draw near. I did so.

"I beg pardon, Mr. Cringle," he said in Spanish, with the ease and grace of a nobleman—"but I believe the interpreter to be incapable, and I am certain that what I say is not fittingly explained to the judges; neither do I believe he can give me a sound notion of what the advocate is alleging against us. May I en-

treat you to solicit the bench for permission to take his place? I know you will expect no apology for the trouble from a man in my situation."

This unexpected address in open court took me fairly aback, and I stopped short while in the act of passing the open space in front of the dock, which was kept clear by six marines in white jackets, whose muskets, fixed bayonets, and uniform caps, seemed out of place to my mind in a criminal court. The lawyer suddenly suspended his harangue, while the judges fixed their eyes on me, and so did the audience, confound them! To be the focus of so many eyes was trying to my modesty; for, although I had mixed a little in the world, and was not altogether unacquainted with bettermost society, still, below any little manner that I had acquired, there was, and always will be, an under stratum of bashfulness, or sheepishness, or *mauvaise honte*, call it which you will; and the torture, the breaking on the wheel, with which a man of that temperament perceives the eyes of a whole court-house, for instance, attracted to him, none but a bashful man can understand. At length I summoned courage to speak.

"May it please your honours, this poor fellow, on his own behalf, and on the part of his fellow-prisoners, complains of the incapacity of the sworn-interpreter, and requests that I may be made the channel of communication in his stead."

This was a tremendous effort, and once more the whole blood of my body rushed to my cheeks and forehead, and I "sweat extremely." The judges, he of the black robe and those of the epaulet, communed together.

"Have you any objection to be sworn, Mr. Cringle?"

"None, in the least, provided the court consider me competent, and the accused are willing to trust to me."

"Si, si!" exclaimed the young Spaniard, as if comprehending what was going on—"Somos contentos—todos, todos!" and he looked round, like a prince, on his fellow culprits. A low murmuring, "Si, si—contento, contento!" passed amongst the group.

"The accused, please your honours, are willing to trust to my correctness."

"Pray, Mr. Cringle, don't make yourself the advocate of these men, mind that," said the lawyer *sans* wig.

"I don't intend it, sir," I said, slightly stung; "but if *you* had suffered what I have done at their hands, *peradventure* such a caution to *you* would have been unnecessary."

The sarcasm told, I was glad to see; but remembering where I was, I hauled out of action with the man of words, simply giving the last shot, "I am sure no English *gentleman*," a *leetle* emphasis on the word, "will throw any difficulty in the way of the poor fellows being made aware of what is given in evidence against them, bad as they may be."

He was about rejoining, for a lawyer would as soon let you have the last word as a sweep or a baker the wall, when the officer of court approached and swore me in, and the trial proceeded.

The whole party were proved by fifty witnesses to have been taken in arms on board of the schooners in the Cove; and, farther, it was proved that no commission or authority to cruise whatsoever was found on board any of them, a strong proof that they were pirates.

"Que dice, que dice?" inquired the young Spaniard already mentioned.

I said that the court seemed to infer, and were pressing it on the jury, that the absence of any commission or letter of marque from a superior officer, or from any of the Spanish authorities, was strong evidence that they were marauders—in fact pirates.

"Ah!" he exclaimed; "gracias, gracias!" Then, with an agitated hand, he drew from his bosom a parchment, folded like the manifest of a merchant-ship, and, at the same moment, the gruff fierce-looking elderly man did the same, with another similar instrument from his own breast.

"Here, here are the commissions—here are authorities from the Captain-General of Cuba. Read them."

I looked over them; they were regular to all appearance, at least as there were no autographs in court of the Spanish Viceroy, or any of his officers, whose signatures, either *real* or *forged*, were affixed to the instruments, with which to compare them. There was a great chance, I conjectured, so far as I saw, that they would be acquitted; and, in this case, *we*, his majesty's officers, would have been converted into the transgressing party; for if it were established that the vessels taken, were *bona fide Guarda Costa's*, we should be placed in an awkward predicament, in having captured them by force of arms, not to take into account the having violated the sanctity of a friendly port.

But I could see that this unexpected production of regular papers, by their officers had surprised the pirates themselves, as much as it had done me,—whether it was a heinous offence of mine or not to con-

ceal this impression from the court, (there is some dispute about the matter to this hour between me and my conscience,) I can't tell; but I was determined to stick scrupulously to the temporary duties of my office, without stating what I suspected, or even translating some sudden expressions overheard by me, that would have shaken the credibility of the documents.

"Comissiones, comissiones!" for instance, was murmured by a weatherbeaten Spaniard, with a fine bald head, from which two smalls tufts of gray hair stood out above his ears, and with a superb Moorish face—"Comissiones—Si hay comissiones, el Diablo mismo, les ha hecho!"

The court was apparently nonplussed—not so the wigless man of law. His pea-green visage assumed a more fiendish hue, and the expression of his eyes became damnable and blasting. He looked altogether like a cat sure of her mouse, but willing to let it play in fancied joy of escaping, as he said softly to the Jew crier, who was perched in a high chair above the heads of the people, like an ugly *corbie* in its dirty nest—"Crier, call Job Rumbletithump, mate of the Porpoise."

"Job Rumbletithump, come into court!"

"Here," quoth Job, as a stout bluff honest-looking sailor rolled into the witness's box.

"Now, clerk of the crown, please to swear in the mate of the Porpoise." It was done. "Now, my man, you were taken going through the Caicos Passage, in the Porpoise, by pirates, in August last—were you not?"

"Yes, sir."

"Turn your face to the jury, and speak up, sir.

Do you see any of the *honest* men who made free with you in that dock, sir? Look at them, sir."

The mate walked up to the dock, stopped, and fixed his eyes intently on the young Spaniard. I stared breathlessly at him also. He grows pale as death—his lip quivers—the large drops of sweat once more burst from his brow. I grew sick, sick.

"Yes, your honour," said the mate.

"Yes—ah!" said the devil's limb, chuckling—"we are getting on the trial at last. Can you swear to more than one!"

"Yes, your honour."

"Yes!" again responded the *sans* wig. "How many?"

The man counted them off. "Fifteen, sir. That young fellow there is the man who cut Captain Spurtel's throat, after violating his wife before his eyes."

"Heaven forgive me, is it possible?" gasped Thomas Cringle.

"There's a monster in human form for you, gentlemen," continued devil's limb. "Go on, Mr. Rumbletithump."

"That other man next him hung me up by the heels, and seared me on the bare"—— Here honest Job had just time to divert the current of his speech into a loud "whew."

"Seared you on the whew!" quoth the facetious lawyer, determined to have his jest, even in the face of forty-three of his fellow creatures, trembling on the brink of eternity. "Explain, sir—tell the court where you were seared, and how you were seared, and all about your being seared."

Job twisted, and lolloped about, as if he was look-

ing out for some opening to bolt through; but all egress was shut up.

"Why, please your honour," the eloquent blood mantling in his honest sunburnt cheeks; while from my heart I pitied the poor fellow, for he was absolutely broiling in his bashfulness—"He seared me on—on—why, please your honour, he seared me on—*with* a red hot iron?"

"Why, I guessed as much, if he seared you at all; but *where* did he sear you? Come now," coaxingly, "tell the court where and how he applied the actual cautery."

Job, being thus driven to his wit's end, turned and stood at bay. "Now, I will tell you, your honour, if you will but sit down for a moment, and answer me one question."

"To be sure; why, Job, you brighten on us. There, I am down—now for your question."

"Now, sir," quoth Rumbletithump, imitating his tormentor's manner much more cleverly than I expected, "what part of your honour's body touches your chair?"

"How, sir!" said the man of words—"how dare you, sir, take such a liberty, sir?" while a murmuring laugh hummed through the court.

"Now, sir, since you won't answer me, sir," said Job, elevated by his victory, while his hoarse voice roughened into a loud growl, "I will answer myself. I was seared, sir, where you ought to be"——

"Silence!" quoth the crier, at this instant drowning the mate's voice, so that I could not catch the word he used.

"And there you have it, sir. Put me in jail if you like, sir."

The murmur was bursting out into a guffaw when the judge interfered. But there was no longer any attempt at ill-timed jesting on the part of the bar, which was but bad taste at the best on so solemn an occasion.

Job continued, "I was burnt into the very muscle, until I told where the gold was stowed away."

"Aha!" screamed the lawyer, forgetting his recent discomfiture in the gladness of success; "And all the rest were abetting, eh?"

"The rest of the fifteen were, sir"——

But the prosecutor, a glutton in his way, had thought he had bagged the whole forty-three. And so he ultimately did before the evening closed in, as most of the others were identified by other witnesses; and when they could not actually be sworn to, the piracies were brought home to them by circumstantial evidence; such, for instance, as having been captured on board of the craft we had taken, which again were identified as the very vessels which had plundered the merchantmen and murdered several of their crews, so that by six o'clock the jury had returned a verdict of guilty—and I believe there never was a juster—against the whole of them. The finding and sentence of death following thereupon, seemed not to create any strong effect upon the prisoners. They had all seen how the trial was going; and, long before this, the bitterness of death seemed to be past.

I could hear one of our boat's crew, who was standing behind me, say to his neighbour, "Why, Tom, surely he is in joke. Why, he don't mean to condemn them to be hanged *seriously*, without his wig, eh?"

Immediately after the judgment was pronounced,

which, both as to import and literally, I had translated to them, Captain N——, who was sitting on the bench beside his brother officers, nodded to me, "I say, Mr. Cringle, tell the coxswain to call Pearl, if you please."

I passed the word to one of the Firebrand's marines, who was on duty, who again repeated the order to a seaman who was standing at the door.

"I say, Moses, call the clergyman."

Now this Pearl was no other than the seaman who pulled the stroke-oar in the gig; a very handsome negro, and the man who afterwards forked Whiffle out of the water—tall, powerful, and muscular, and altogether one of the best men in the ship. The rest of the boat's crew, from his complexion, had fastened the *sobriquet* of the clergyman on him.

"Call the clergyman."

The superseded interpreter, who was standing near, seeing I took no notice, immediately *traduced* this literally to the unhappy men. A murmur arose amongst them.

"Que—el padre ya? Somos en Capillo entonces—poco tiempo, poco tiempo!"

They had thought that the clergyman, having been sent for, the sentence was immediately to be executed, but I undeceived them; and, in ten minutes after they were condemned, they were marched off under a heavy escort of foot to the jail. I must make a long story short. Two days afterwards, I was ordered with the launch to Kingston, early in the morning, to receive twenty-five of the pirates who had been ordered for execution that morning at Gallows Point. It was little past four in the morning when we arrived at the wherry wharf, where they were al-

ready clustered, with their hands pinioned behind their backs, silent and sad, but all of them calm, and evincing no unmanly fear of death.

I don't know if other people have noticed it, but this was one of several instances where I have seen foreigners—Frenchmen, Italians, and Spaniards, for instance, meet death, *inevitable death*, with greater firmness than British soldiers or sailors. Let me explain. In the field, or grappling in mortal combat, on the blood-slippery quarter-deck of an enemy's vessel, a British soldier or sailor is the bravest of the brave. No soldier or sailor of any other country, saving and excepting those d——d Yankees, can stand against him, they would be utterly overpowered —their hearts would fail them, they would either be cut down, thrust through, or they would turn and flee. Yet those same men who have turned and fled, will meet death, but it must be, as I said, *inevitable, unavoidable death*, not only more firmly than their conquerors would do in their circumstances, but with an intrepidity—oh, do not call it indifference!—altogether astonishing. Be it their religion, or their physical conformation, or what it may, all I have to do with, is the fact which I record as undeniable. Out of five-and-twenty individuals, in the present instance, not a sigh was heard, nor a moan, nor a querulous word. They stepped lightly into the boats, and seated themselves in silence. When told by the seamen to make room, or to shift so as not to be in the way of the oars, they did so with alacrity, and almost with an air of civility, although they knew that within half an hour their earthly career must close for ever.

The young Spaniard who had stood forward so conspicuously on the trial, was in my boat; in stepping

in, he accidentally trode on my foot in passing forward; he turned and apologized with much natural politeness—"He hoped he had not hurt me!"

I answered kindly, I presume—who could have done so harshly? This emboldened him apparently, for he stopped, and asked leave to sit by me. I consented, while an incomprehensible feeling crept over me; and when once I had time to recollect myself, I shrunk from him, as a blood-stained brute, with whom even in his extremity it was unfitting for me to hold any intercourse. When he noticed my repugnance to remain near him, he addressed me hastily, as if afraid that I would destroy the opportunity he seemed to desire.

"God did not always leave me the slave of my passions," he said, in a low, deep, most musical voice. "The day has been when I would have shrunk as you do,—but time presses. *You have a mother?*" said he—I assented—"*and an only sister?*" As it happened, he was right here too. "And—and"—here he hesitated, and his voice shook and trembled with the most intense and heart-crushing emotion—"*y una mas cara que ambos?*"—Mary, you can tell whether in this he did not also speak truth. I acknowledged there was another being more dear to me than either. "Then," said he, "take this chain from my neck, and the crucifix, and a small miniature from my bosom; but *not yet*—not till I leave the boat. You will find an address affixed to the string of the latter. Your course of service may lead you to St. Jago—if not, a brother officer may"—His voice became inaudible; his hot scalding tears dropped fast on my hand, and the ravisher, the murderer, the *pirate*, wept as an innocent and helpless infant. "You

will deliver it. Promise a dying man—promise a great sinner." But it was momentary—he quelled the passion with a fierce and savage energy, as he said sternly, "*Promise! promise!*" I did so, and I fulfilled it. The day broke. I took the jewels and miniature from his neck, as he led the way with the firm step of a hero in ascending the long gibbet.—The halters were adjusted, when he stepped towards the side I was on, as far as the rope would let him, "Dexa me verla—dexa me verla, una ves mas!" I held up the miniature. He looked—he *glared* intensely at it. "Adios, Maria, seas feliz mi querida—feliz—feliz—Maria—adios—adios—Maria—Mar"—

The rope severed thy name from his heart, sweet girl; but not until it also severed his soul from his body, and sent him to his tremendous account—young in years, but old in wickedness—to answer at that tribunal, where we must all appear, to the God who made him, and whose gifts he had so fearfully abused, for thy broken heart and early death, amongst the other scarlet atrocities of his short but ill spent life.

The signal had been given—the lumbering flap of the long drop was heard, and five-and-twenty human beings were wavering in the sea-breeze in the agonies of death! The other eighteen suffered on the same spot the week following; and for long after this fearful and bloody example struck terror into the Cuba fishermen.

"Strange now, that the majority—ahem—of my beauties and favourites through life have been called *Mary*. There is my own Mary—*en peu passez*, certainly—but *deil mean* her, for half a dozen lit—— Now, Tom Cringle, don't bother with your sentimen-

tality, but get along, do—Well, I will get along—but have patience, you Hottentot Venus—you Lord Nugent, you. So once more we make sail."

Next morning, soon after gun-fire, I landed at the Wherry wharf in Port-Royal. It was barely daylight, but, to my surprise, I found my friend Perigrine Whiffle seated on a Spanish chair, close to the edge of the wharf, smoking a cigar. This piece of furniture is an arm chair, strongly framed with hardwood, over which, back and bottom, a tanned hide is stretched, which, in a hot climate, forms a most luxurious seat, the back tumbling out to an angle of 45 degrees, while the skin yields to every movement, and does not harbour a nest of biting ants, or a litter of scorpions, or any other of the customary occupants of a cushion that has been in Jamaica for a year.

He did not know me as I passed; but his small glimmering red face instantly identified the worthy little old man to me.

"Good morning, Mr. Whiffle—the top of the morning to you, sir."

"Hillo," responded Peregrine—"Tom, is it you?—how d'ye do, man—how d'ye do?" and he started to his feet, and almost embraced me.

Now, I had never met the said Peregrine Whiffle but twice in my life; once at Mr. Fyall's, and once during the few days I remained in Kingston, before I set out on my travels; but he was a warm-hearted kindly old fellow, and, from knowing all my friends there very intimately, he, as a matter of course, became equally familiar with me.

"Why the *diable* came you not to see me, man? Have been here for change of air, to recruit, you know, after that demon, the gout, had been so per-

plexing me, ever since you came to anchor—the Firebrand, I mean—as for you, you have been mad one while, and philandering with those inconvenient white ladies the other. You'll cure of that, my boy—you'll come to the original comforts of the country soon, no fear!"

"Perhaps I may, perhaps not."

"Oh, your cousin Mary, I forgot—fine girl, Tom—may do for you at *home* yonder," (all Creoles speak of England as home, although they may never have seen it;) "but she can't make pepper-pot, nor give a dish of land-crabs as landcrabs should be given, nor see to the serving up of a ringtail pigeon, nor rub a beefsteak to the rotting turn with a bruised papaw, nor compose a medicated bath, nor, nor—oh, confound it, Tom, she will be, when you marry her, a cold, comfortless, motionless Creole icicle!"

I let him have his swing. "Never mind her then, never mind her, my dear sir; but time presses and I must be off, I must, indeed, so good morning; I wish you a good morning, sir."

He started to his feet, and caught hold of me.—

"Sha'n't go, Tom impossible—come along with me to my lodgings, and breakfast with me. Here, Pilfer, Pilfer," to his black valet, "give me my stick, and massu* the chair, and run home and order breakfast—cold calipiver—our Jamaica salmon, you know, Tom—tea and coffee—pickled mackerel, eggs, and cold tongue—any thing that Mother Dingychops can give us; so bolt, Pilfer, bolt!"

I told him that before I came ashore I had heard the gig's crew piped away, and that I, therefore *ex-*

* Massu—Lift.

pected, as Jonathan says, that the captain would be after me immediately; so that I wished at all events to get away from where we were, as I had no desire to be caught gossiping about when my superior might be expected to pass.

"True, boy, true"—as he shackled himself to me, and we began to crawl along towards the wharf-gate leading into the town. Captain N——— by this time had landed, and came up with us.

"Ah, N———," said Whiffle, "glad to see you. I say, why won't you allow Mr. Cringle here to go over to Spanish Town with me for a couple of days, eh?"

"Why, I don't remember that Mr. Cringle has ever asked leave."

"Indeed, sir, I neither did ask leave, nor have I thought of doing so," said I.

"But I do for you," chimed in my friend Whiffle. "Come, Captain, give him leave, just for two days, that's a prime chap. Why, Tom, you see you have got it, so off with you and come to me with your kit as soon as possible, I will hobble on and make the coffee and chocolate; and, Captain N——, come along and breakfast with me too. No refusal; I require society. Nearly drowned yesterday, do you know that? Off this same cursed wharf too—just here. I was looking down at the small fish playing about the piles, precisely in this position; one of them was as bright in the scales as a gold fish in my old grandmother's glass globe, and I had to crane over the ledge in this fashion," suiting the action to the word, "when away I went"——

And to our unutterable surprise, splash went Peregrine Whiffle, Esquire, *for the second time*, and there he was shouting, and puffing, and splashing in the

water. We were both so convulsed with laughter that I believe he would have been drowned for us; but the boat-keeper of the gig, the strong athletic negro before mentioned, promptly jumped on the wharf with his boat-hook, and caught the dapper little old beau by the waistband of his breeches, swaying him up, frightened enough, with his little coat skirts fluttering in the breeze, and no wonder, but not much the worse for it all.

"*Diable porte l'amour,*" whispered captain N——.

"Swallowed a Scotch pint of salt water to a certainty—run, Pilfer, bring me some brandy—gout will be into my stomach, sure as fate—feel him now—run, Pilfer, run, or gout will beat you—a *dead heat* that will be!" And he *keckled* at his small joke very complacently.

We had him carried by our people to his lodgings, where, after shifting and brandying to some tune, he took his place at the breakfast table, and did the honours with his usual amenity and warmheartedness.

After breakfast Peregrine remembered, what the sly rogue had never forgotten I suspect, that he was engaged to dine with his friend Mr. Pepperpot Wagtail, in Kingston. "But it don't signify, Wagtail will be delighted to see you, Tom—hospitable fellow, Wagtail—and, now I recollect myself, Fyall and Aaron Bang are to be there; dang it, were it not for the gout, we should have a night on't!" after breakfast we started in a canoe for Kingston, touching at the Firebrand for my kit.

Moses Yerk, the unpoetical first lieutenant, was standing well forward on the quarterdeck as I passed over the side to get into the canoe, with the gunroom

steward following me, carrying my kit under his arm.

"I say, Tom, good for you, one lark after another."

"Don't like that fellow," quoth Whiffle; "he is quarrelsome in his drink for a thousand; I know it by the cut of his jib."

He had better have held his tongue, honest man; for as he looked up broad in Yerk's face, who was leaning over the hammocks, the scupper immediately over head, through whose instrumentality I never knew, was suddenly cleared, and a rush of dirty water, that had been lodged there since the decks had been washed down at day-dawn, splashed slapdash over his head and shoulders and into his mouth, so as to set the dear little man a-coughing so violently that I thought he would have been throttled. Before he had recovered sufficiently to find his tongue, we had pulled fifty yards from the ship, and a little farther on we overtook the captain, who had preceded us in the cutter, into which we transhipped ourselves. But Whiffle never could acquit Yerk of having been, directly or indirectly, the cause of his suffering from the impure shower.

This day was the first of the Negro Carnival or Christmas Holidays, and at the distance of two miles from Kingston the sound of the negro drums and horns, the barbarous music and yelling of the different African tribes, and the more mellow singing of the Set Girls, came off upon the breeze loud and strong.

When we got nearer, the wharves and different streets, as we successively opened them, were crowded with the blackamoors, men, women, and children, dancing and singing and shouting, and all rigged out

in their best. When we landed on the agents' wharf we were immediately surrounded by a group of these merry-makers, which happened to be the Butchers' John Canoe party, and a curious exhibition it unquestionably was. The prominent character was, as usual, the John Canoe or Jack Pudding. He was a light, active, clean made, young Creole negro, without shoes or stockings; he wore a pair of light jean small-clothes, all too wide, but confined at the knees, below and above, by bands of red tape, after the manner that Malvolio would have called cross-gartering. He wore a splendid blue velvet waistcoat, with old-fashioned flaps coming down over his hips, and covered with tarnished embroidery. His shirt was absent on leave I suppose, but at the wrists of his coat he had tin or white iron frills, with loose pieces attached, which tinkled as he moved, and set off the dingy paws that were stuck through these strange manacles, like black wax tapers in silver candlesticks. His coat was an old blue artillery uniform one, with a small bell hung to the extreme points of the swallowtailed skirts, and three tarnished epaulets; one on each shoulder, and, O ye immortal gods! O Mars armipotent! the biggest of the three stuck at his rump, the *point d'appui* for a sheep's tail. He had an enormous cocked hat, to which was appended in front a white falseface or mask, of a most methodistical expression, while, Janus-like, there was another face behind, of the most quizzical description, a sort of living Antithesis, both being garnished and overtopped with one coarse wig, made of the hair of bullocks' tails, on which the *chapeau* was strapped down with a broad band of gold lace. He skipped up to us with a white wand in one hand and a dirty hand-

kerchief in the other, and with sundry moppings, and mowings, first wiping my shoes with his *mouchoir*, then my face, (murder, what a flavour of salt fish and onions, it had!) he made a smart enough pirouette, and then sprung on the back of a nondescript animal, that now advanced capering and jumping about after the most grotesque fashion that can be imagined. This was the signal for the music to begin. The performers were two gigantic men, dressed in calfskins entire, head, four legs, and tail. The skin of the head was made to fit like a hood, the two fore-feet hung dangling down in front, one over each shoulder, while the other two legs or hind-feet, and the tail, trailed behind on the ground; deuce another article had they on in the shape of clothing except a handkerchief, of some flaming pattern, tied round the waist. There were also two fluteplayers in sheepskins, looking still more outlandish from the horns on the animals' heads being preserved; and three stout fellows, who were dressed in the common white frock and trousers, who kept sounding on bullocks' horns. These formed the band as it were, and might be considered John's immediate tail or following; but he was also accompanied by about fifty of the butcher negroes, all neatly dressed—blue jackets, white shirts, and Osnaburgh trousers, with their steels and knife cases by their sides, as bright as Turkish yataghans, and they all wore clean blue and white striped aprons. I could see and tell what *they* were; but the *Thing* John Canoe had perched himself upon I could make nothing of. At length I began to comprehend the device.

The *Magnus Apollo* of the party, the poet and chief musician, the nondescript already mentioned,

was no less than the boatswain of the butcher gang, answering to the driver in an agricultural one. He was clothed in an entire bullock's hide, horns, tail, and the other particulars, the whole of the skull being retained, and the effect of the voice growling through the jaws of the beast was most startling. His legs were enveloped in the skin of the hind-legs; while the arms were cased in that of the fore, the hands protruding a little above the hoofs, and, as he walked reared up on his hind-legs, he used, in order to support the load of the John Canoe who had perched on his shoulders, like a monkey on a dancing bear, a strong stick, or sprit, with a crutch top to it, which he leant his breast on every now and then.

After the creature, which I will call the *Device* for shortness, had capered with its extra load, as if it had been a feather, for a minute or two, it came to a stand-still, and, striking the end of the sprit into the ground, and tucking the crutch of it under its chin, it motioned to one of the attendants, who thereupon handed of all things in the world, a *fiddle to the ox.* He then shook off the John Canoe, who began to caper about as before, while the *Device* set up a deuced good pipe, and sung and played, barbarously enough, I will admit, to the tune of Guinea Corn, the following ditty:—

"Massa Buccra lob for see
Bullock caper like monkee—
Dance, and shump, and poke him toe,
Like one humane person—just so."—

And hereupon the tail of the beast, some fifty strong, music men, John Canoe and all, began to rampage

about, as if they had all been possessed by devils incarnate:

"But Massa Buccra have white love,
Soft and silkin like one dove.
To brown girl—him barely shivel—
To black girl—oh, la, de Devil!"

Then a tremendous galloping, in the which old Tailtackle was nearly capsized over the wharf. He looked quietly over the edge of it. "Boatkeeper, hand me up that switch of a stretcher." (Friend, if thou be'st not nautical, thou knowest what a *rack-pin*, something of the stoutest, is.) The boy did so, and Tailtackle, after moistening well his dexter claw with tobacco juice, seized the stick with his left by the middle, and balancing it for a second or two, he began to fasten the end of it into his right fist, as if he had been screwing a bolt into a socket. Having satisfied himself that his grip was secure, he let go the hold with his left hand, and crossed his arms on his breast, with the weapon projecting over his left shoulder, like the drone of a bagpipe. The *Device* continued his chant, giving the seaman a wide berth, however:—

"But when him once two tree year here,
Him tink white lady wery great boder;
De coloured peoples, never fear,
Ah, him lob him de morest nor any oder."

Then another tumblification of the whole party.

"But top—one time bad fever catch him.
Coloured peoples kindly watch him—
In sick room, nurse voice like music—
From him hand taste sweet de physic."

Another trampoline.

"So alway come—in two tree year,
And so wid you, massa—never fear
Brown girl for cook—for wife—for nurse:
Buccra lady—poo—no wort a curse."

"Get away you scandalous scoundrel," cried I; "away with you, sir!"

Here the morrice-dancers began to circle round old Tailtackle, keeping him on the move, spinning round like a weathercock in a whirlwind, while they shouted, "Oh, massa, one *macaroni** if you please." To get quit of their importunity, Captain N—— gave them one. "Ah, good massa, tank you, sweet massa!" And away danced John Canoe and his tail, careering up the street.

In the same way all the other crafts and trades had their Gumbi-men, Horn-blowers, John Canoes, and Nondescript. The Gardeners came nearest of any thing I had seen before to the May-day boys in London, with this advantage, that their Jack-in-the-Green was incomparably more beautiful, from the superior bloom of the larger flowers used in composing it. The very workhouse people, whose province it is to guard the Negro culprits who may be committed to it, and to inflict punishment on them, when required, had their John Canoe and *Device;* and their prime jest seemed to be every now and then to throw the fellow down who enacted the latter at the corner of a street, and to administer a sound flogging to him. The John Canoe, who was the workhouse driver, was dressed up in a lawyer's cast-off gown and bands, black silk breeches, no stockings nor shoes, but with sandals of

* A quarter dollar.

bullock's hide strapped on his great splay feet, a small cocked hat on his head, to which were appended a large cauliflower wig, and the usual white falseface, bearing a very laughable resemblance to Chief Justice S——, with whom I happened to be personally acquainted.

The whole party which accompanied these two worthies, musicians and tail, were dressed out so as to give a tolerable resemblance of the Bar broke loose, and they were all pretty considerably well drunk. As we passed along, the *Device* was once more laid down, and we could notice a shield of tough hide strapped over the fellow's stern frame, so as to save the lashes of the cat, which John Canoe was administering with all his force, while the *Device* walloped about and yelled, as if he had been receiving the punishment on his naked flesh. Presently, as he rolled over and over in the sand, bellowing to the life, I noticed the leather shield slip upwards to the small of his back, leaving the lower story uncovered in reality; but the driver and his tail were too drunk to observe this, and the former continued to lay on and laugh, while one of his people stood by in all the gravity of drunkenness, counting, as a first lieutenant does, when a poor fellow is polishing at the gangway,—"Twenty—twenty-one—twenty-two"—and so on, while the patient roared you, an it were any thing but a nightingale. At length he broke away from the men who held him, after receiving a most sufficient flogging, to revenge which he immediately fastened on the John Canoe, wrenched his cat from him, and employed it so scientifically on him and his followers, giving them passing taps on the shins now and then with the handle, by way of spice to the dose, that the

whole crew pulled foot as if Old Nick held them in chase.

The very children, urchins of five and six years old, had their Lilliputian John Canoes and *Devices*. But the beautiful part of the exhibition was the Set Girls. They danced along the streets, in bands of from fifteen to thirty. There were brown sets, and black sets, and sets of all the intermediate gradations of colour. Each set was dressed pin for pin alike, and carried umbrellas or parasols of the same colour and size, held over their nice showy, well put on *toques*, or Madras handkerchiefs, all of the same pattern, tied round their heads, fresh out of the fold, and in the most luxurious attitudes. They sang as they swam along the streets, and I had never seen more beautiful creatures than were amongst the brown sets —clear olive complexions, and fine faces, elegant carriages, splendid figures, full, plump, and magnificent.

Most of the sets were as much of a size as Lord ——'s *eighteen* daughters, sailing down Regent Street, like a Charity School of a Sunday, led by a rum-looking old beadle—others again had large Roman matron-looking women in the leading files, the *figurantes* in their tails becoming slighter and smaller as they tapered away, until they ended in *leetle Picaniny, no bigger as my tumb*, but always preserving the uniformity of dress, and colour of the umbrella or parasol. Sometimes the breeze, on opening a corner, would strike the sternmost of a set composed in this manner of small fry, and stagger the little things, getting beneath their tiny umbrellas, and fairly blowing them out of the line, and ruffling their ribands and finery, as if they had been tulips bending and

shaking their leaves before it. But the *colours* were never blended in the same set—no blackie ever interloped with the browns, nor did the browns in any case mix with the sables—always keeping in mind—black *woman*—brown *lady*.

But, as if the whole city had been tomfooling, a loud burst of military music was now heard, and the north end of the street we were ascending, which leads out of the *Place d'Armes* or parade, that occupies the centre of the town, was filled with a cloud of dust, that rose as high as the house-tops, through which the head of a column of troops sparkled, swords, and bayonets, and gay uniforms glancing in the sun. This was the Kingston regiment marching down to the Court-house in the lower part of the town, to mount the Christmas guards, which is always carefully attended to, in case any of the John Canoes should take a small fancy to burn or pillage the town, or to rise and cut the throats of their masters, or any little innocent recreation of the kind, out of compliment to Dr. Lushington, or Messrs. Macauly and Babington.

First came a tolerably good band, a little too drummy, but still not amiss—well dressed, only the performers being of all colours, from white, down to jet-black, had a curious hodge-podge, or piebald appearance. Then came a dozen mounted officers at the very least—colonels-in-chief, and colonels, and lieutenant-colonels, and majors—all very fine, and very bad horsemen. Then the grenadier company, composed of white clerks of the place, very fine-looking young men indeed—another white company followed, not quite so smart looking—then came a century of the children of Israel, not over military in appearance

—a phalanx of light browns succeeded, then a company of dark browns, or mulattoes; the regular half-and-half in this, as well as in grog, is the best mixture after all—then quashie himself, or a company of free blacks, who, with the browns, seemed the best soldiers of the set, excepting the flank companies—and after blackie the battalion again gradually whitened away, until it ended in a very fine light company of buccras, smart young fellows as need be—all the officers were white, and all the soldiers, whatever their caste or colour, free, of course. Another battalion succeeded, composed in the same way, and really I was agreeably surprised to find the indigenous force of the colony so efficient. I had never seen any thing more soldier-like amongst our volunteers at home. Presently a halt was called, and a mounted officer, evidently desirous of showing off, galloped up to where we were standing, and began to swear at the drivers of a wagon, with a long team of sixteen bullocks, who had placed their vehicle, whether intentionally or not I could not tell, directly across the street, where being met by another wagon of the same kind, coming through the opposite lane, a regular jam had taken place, as they had contrived, being redolent of new rum, to lock their wheels, and twist their lines of bullocks together, in much admired confusion.

"Out of the way, sir, out of the way, you black rascals—don't you see the regiment coming?" The men spanked their long whips, and shouted to the steers by name—"Back, back—Cæsar—Antony—Crab—back, sir, back;" and they whistled loud and long, but Cæsar and the rest only became more and more involved—"Order arms," roared another officer, fairly beaten by the bullocks and wagons.—

"Stand at ease."—On this last signal, a whole cloud of spruce-beer sellers started fiercely from under the piazzas. "An insurrection of the slave population, mayhap,—thought I, but their object was a very peaceable one, for presently, I verily believe, every man and officer in the regiment, had a tumbler of this, to me, most delicious of all beverages, at his head—the drawing of the corks was more like street-firing than any thing else—a regular *feu de joie*. In the meantime, a council of war seemed to be holden by the mounted officers, as to how the obstacle in front was to be overcome; but, at this moment, confusion became worse confounded, by the approach of what I concluded to be the white man's John Canoe party, mounted by way of pre-eminence—First came a trumpeter, John Canoe, with a *black* face, which was all in rule, as his black counterparts wore *white* ones; but his *Device*, a curious little old man, dressed in a sort of blue uniform, and mounted on the skeleton, or ghost of a gig horse, I could make nothing of. It carried a drawn sword in its hand, with which it made various flourishes, at each one of which I trembled for its Rosinante's ears. The *Device* was followed by about fifty other odd-looking creatures, all on horseback; but they had no more *seat* than so many pairs of tongs, which, in truth, they greatly resembled, and made no show, and less fun. So we were wishing them out of the way, when some one whispered that the Kingston Light Horse mustered strong this morning. I found afterwards that every man who kept a good horse, or could ride, invariably served in the foot—all free persons must join some corps or other; so that the *troop*, as it was called,

was composed exclusively of those who could not ride, and who kept no saddle-horses.

The line was now formed, and, after a variety of cumbrous manœuvres out of Dundas, sixteen, at the least, the regiment was countermarched, and filed along another street, where they gave three cheers, in honour of their having had a drink of spruce, and of having circumvented the bullocks and wagons. A little farther on we encountered four beautiful nine-pounder field-pieces, each lumbering along, drawn by half a dozen mules, and accompanied by three or four negroes, but with no escort whatsoever.

"I say, quashie, where are the bombardiers, the artillerymen?"

"Oh, massa, dem all gone to drink pruce"——

"What, more spruce!—spruce, nothing but spruce!" quoth I.

"Oh, yes, massa—after dem drink, pruce done, dem all go to him breakfast, massa—left we for take de gun to the barrack—beg one *feepenny*, massa"—as the price of the information, I suppose.

"Are the guns loaded?" said I.

"Me no sabe, massa—top, I shall see." And the fellow, to whom I addressed myself, stepped forward and began to squint into the muzzle of one of the field-pieces, slewing his head from side to side, with absurd gravity, like a magpie peeping into a marrow-bone. "Him most be load—no daylight come troo de touch-hole—take care—make me try him." And, without more ado, he shook out the red embers from his pipe right on the touch-hole of the gun, when the fragment of a broken tube spun up in a small jet of flame, that made me start and jump back.

"How dare you, you scoundrel,"—said the captain.

"Eigh, massa, you no hax me to see if him be load—so I was try see. Indeed, I tink him *is* load after all yet."

He stepped forward, and entered his rammer into the cannon, after an unavailing attempt to blow with his blubber-lips through the touch-hole.

Noticing that it did not produce the ringing sound it would have done in an empty gun, but went home with a soft *thud*, I sung out, "Stand clear, sir. By Jupiter, the gun *is* loaded."

The negro continued to *bash* at it with all his might.

Meanwhile, the fellow who was driving the mules attached to the field-piece, turned his head, and saw what was going on. In a trice, he snatched up another rammer, and, without any warning, came crack over the fellow's cranium, to whom we had been speaking, as hard as he could draw, making the instrument quiver again.

"Dem you, ye ye Jericho—ah, so you *bash* my brokefast—eh? You no see me tick him into de gun before we yoke de mule, dem, eh?—You tief, you, eh?"

"No!" roared the other,—"you Walkandnyam, you hab no brokefast, you liard—at least I never see him."

"Dem lie dat!" rejoined Walkandnyam—"look in de gun."

Jericho peered into it again.

"Dere, you son of a——" (I shan't say what)—"dere, I see de red flannin wadding over de cartridge—Your brokefast!—you be dem!"

And he made at him as if he would have eaten him alive.

"You be dem youshef!" shrieked Walkandnyam; "and de red wadding be dem!" as he took a screw, and hooked out, not a cartridge, certainly, but his own night-cap, full of yams and salt fish, smashed into a paste by Jericho's rammer.

In the frenzy of his rage, he dashed this into his opponent's face, and they both stripped in a second. Separating several yards, they levelled their heads like two telescopes on stands, and ran *butt* at each other like ram-goats, and quite as odoriferous,—making the welkin ring again as their flint-hard skulls cracked together. Finding each other invulnerable in this direction, they closed, and began scrambling and biting and kicking, and tumbling over and over in the sand; while the skipper and I stood by cheering them on, and nearly suffocated with laughter. They never once struck with their closed fists, I noticed; so they were not much hurt. It was great cry and little wool; and at length they got tired, and hauled off by mutual consent, finishing off, as usual, with an appeal to us—"beg one feepenny, massa!"

At six o'clock we drove to Mr. Pepperpot Wagtails. The party was a bachelor one, and, when we walked up the front steps, there was our host in person, standing to receive us at the door; while, on each side of him, there were five or six of his visiters, all sitting with their legs cocked up, their feet resting on a sort of surbase, above which the jealousies, or moveable blinds of the piazza, were fixed.

I was introduced to the whole party *seriatim*—and as each of the cock-legs dropped his *trams*, he start-

ed up, caught hold of my hand, and wrung it as if I had been his dearest and oldest friend.

Were I to designate Jamaica as a community, I would call it a hand-shaking people. I have often laughed heartily upon seeing two cronies meeting in the streets of Kingston after a temporary separation; when about pistol-shot asunder both would begin to tug and rug at the right hand glove, but it is frequently a mighty serious affair in that hissing hot climate to get the gauntlet off; they approach,—one, a smart urbane little man, who would not disgrace St. James's street, being more kiln-dried and less moist in his corporeals than his country friend, has contrived to extract his paw, and holds it out in act to shake.

"Ah! how do you do, Ratoon?" quoth the Kingston man.

"Quite well, Shingles," rejoined the *gloved*, a stout, red-faced sudoriferous yam-fed planter, dressed in blue-white jean trousers and waistcoat, with long Hessian boots drawn up to his knee over the former, and a span-new square-skirted blue coatee, with lots of clear brass buttons; a broad-brimmed black silk hat, worn white at the edge of the crown—wearing a very small neckcloth, about which shoots up an enormous shirt collar, the peaks of which might serve for winkers to a starting horse, and carrying a large whip in his hand—"Quite well, my dear fellow," while he persists in dragging at it—the other *homo* all the while standing in the absurd position of a finger-post—at length off comes the glove—piecemeal, perhaps—a finger first, for instance, then a thumb, at length they tackle too, and shake each other like the very devil—not a sober, pump-handle shake, but a

regular jiggery jiggery, as if they were trying to dislocate each other's arms—and, confound them, they don't let go—they cling like sucker fish, and talk and wallop about, and throw themselves back, and laugh, and then another jiggery jiggery.

"On horseback, this custom is conspicuously ridiculous—I have nearly gone into fits at beholding two men careering along the road at a hand-gallop—each on a goodish horse, with his negro boy astern of him on a mule, in clean frock and trousers, and smart glazed hat with broad gold band, with massa's umbrella in a leathern case slung across his shoulders, and his portmanteau behind him on a mail pillion covered with a snow-white sheep's fleece—suddenly they would pull up on recognising each other, when, tucking their whips under their arms, or crossing them in their teeth, it may be—they would commence the rugging and riving operation. In this case—Shingle's bit of blood swerves, we may assume—Ratoon rides at him—Shingle fairly turns tail, and starts out at full speed, Ratoon thundering in his rear, with stretched-out arm; and it does happen, I am assured, that the hot pursuit often continues for a mile, before the desired clapperclaw is obtained. But when two lusty planters meet on horseback, then, indeed, Greek meets Greek. They begin the interview by shouting to each other, while fifty yards off, pulling away at the gloves all the while—"How are you, Canetop?—glad to see you, Canetop. How do you do, *I hope.*"—"How are you, Yamfu, my dear fellow?" their horses fretting and jumping all the time—and if the Jack Spaniards or gadflies be rife, they have, even when denuded for the shake, to spur at each other, more like a Knight Templar and a Sara-

cen charging in mortal combat, than two men merely struggling to be civil; and after all they have often to get their black servants alongside to hold their horses, for *shake* they must, were they to break their necks in the attempt. Why they won't shake hands with their gloves on, I am sure *I* can't tell. It would be much cooler and nicer—lots of *Scotchmen* in the community, too.

This hand-skaking, however, was followed by an invitation to dinner from each individual in the company. I looked at Captain N———, as much as to say, "Can they mean us to take them at their word?" He nodded. "We are sorry, that being under orders to go to sea on Sunday morning, neither Mr. Cringle nor myself can have the pleasure of accepting such kind invitations." "Well, when you come back, you know—one day you *must* give *me*"—"And I won't be denied," quoth a second—Liberty Hall, you know, so to me you must come, no ceremony," said a third—and so on.

At length, no less a man drove up to the door, than Judge ———. When he drew up, his servant, who was sitting behind on a small projection of the ketureen, came round and took a parcel out of the gig, closely wrapped in a blanket—"Bring that carefully in, Leonidas," said the Judge, who now stumped up stairs with a small saw in his hand. He received the parcel, and, laying it down carefully in a corner, he placed the saw on it, and then came up and shook hands with Wagtail, and made his bow very gracefully.

"What—can't you do without your ice and sour claret yet?" said Wagtail. "Never mind, never mind," said the Judge; and here dinner being an-

nounced, we all adjourned to the dining-room, where a very splendid entertainment was set out, to which we set to, and in the end, as it will appear, we did the utmost justice to it.

The wines were most exquisite. Madeira, for instance, never can be drank in perfection any where out of the tropics. You may have the wine as good at home, although I doubt it, but then you have not the climate to drink it in—I would say the same of most of the delicate French wines—that is, those that will stand the voyage—Burgundy of course not included; but never mind, let us get along.

The decanters were covered with cotton bags, kept wet with saltpetre and water, so that the evaporation carried on powerfully by the stream of air that flowed across the room, through the open doors and windows, made the fluids quite as cool as was desirable to worthies sitting luxuriating with the thermometer at 80 or thereby; yet from the free current, I was in no way made aware of this degree of heat by any oppressive sensation; and I found in the West Indies, as well as in the East, although the wind in the latter is more dry and parching, that a current of heated air, if it be moderately dry, even with the thermometer at 95 in the shade, is really not so enervating or oppressive as I have found it in the stagnating atmosphere on the sunny side of Pall Mall, with the mercury barely at 75. A cargo of ice had a little before this arrived at Kingston, and at first all the inhabitants who could afford it iced every thing, wine, water, cold meats, fruits, and the Lord knows what all, tea, I believe, amongst other things, (by the way, I have tried this, and it *is* a luxury in its way;) but the regular old stagers, who knew what was what, and had a

regard for their interiors, soon began to eschew the ice in every way, saving and excepting to cool the water that washed their thin faces and hands in; so *we* had no ice, nor did we miss it; but the judge had a plateful of chips on the table before him, one of which he every now and then popped into his long thin bell-glass of claret, diluting it, I should have thought, in rather a heathenish manner; but *n'importe*, he worked away, sawing off pieces now and then from the large lump in the blanket, (to save the tear and wear attending a fracture,) which was handed to him by his servant, so that by eleven o'clock at night, allowing for the water, he must have concealed his three bottles of pure claret, besides garnishing with a lot of white wines. In fine, we all carried on astonishingly, some good singing was given, a practical joke was tried now and then by Fyall, and we continued mighty happy. As to the singing part of it,—the landlord, with a bad voice, and worse ear, opened the *rorytory*, by volunteering a very extraordinary squeak; fortunately, it was not very long, but it gave him a plea to screw a song out of his right-hand neighbour, who in turn acquired the same right of compelling the person next him to make a fool of himself; at last it came to N———, who, by-the-by, sung exceedingly well, but he had got more wine than usual, and essayed the coquette a bit.

"Bring the wet nightcap!" quoth our host.

"Oh, it is that you're at?" said N——, and he sung as required; but it was all pearls before swine, I fear. At last we stuck fast at Fyall. Music! there was not one particle in his whole composition; so the wet nightcap already impended over him, when

I sung out, "Let him tell a story, Mr. Wagtail! Let him tell a story!"

"Thank you, Tom," said Fyall; "I owe you a good turn, for that, my boy."

"Fyall's story—Mr. Fyall's story!" resounded on all hands. Fyall, glad to escape the song and wet nightcap, instantly began.

"Why, my friends, you all know Isaac Grimm, the Jew snuff-merchant and cigar-maker, in Harbour Street. Well, Isaac had a brother, Ezekiel by name, who carried on business in Curacoa; you may have heard of him too. Ezekiel was often down here for the purpose of laying in provisions, and purchasing dry goods. You all know that?"

"Certainly!" shouted both Captain N—— and myself in a breath, although we had never heard of him before.

"Hah, I knew it!—Well then, Ezekiel was very rich; he came down in August last, in the Pickle schooner, and, as bad luck would have it, he fell sick of the fever.—'Isaac,' quoth Ezekiel, 'I am wery sheek; I tink I shall tie.'—'Hope note, dear proder; you hab no vife, nor shildir; pity you should tie, Ezekiel. Ave you make your vill, Ezekiel?'—'Yesh; de vill is make. I leavesh every ting to you, Isaac, on von condition, dat you send my pody to be bury in Curacoa. I love dat place; twenty years since I lef de Minories, all dat time I cheat dere, and tell lie dere, and lif dere happily. Oh, you most sent my pody for its puryment to Curacoa!'—'I will do dat, mine proder.'—'Den I depart in peace, dear Isaac;' and the Israelite was as good as his word for *once*. He *did die*. Isaac, according to his promise, applied

to the captains of several schooners; none of them would take the dead body. 'What shall I do?' thought Isaac, 'de monish mosh not be loss.' So he straightway had Ezekiel (for even a Jew won't keep long in that climate) cut up and packed with pickle into two barrels, marked, 'Prime mess pork, Leicester. M'Call and Co., Cork.' He then shipped the same in the Fan Fan, taking bills of lading, in accordance with the brand, deliverable to Mordecai Levi of Curacoa, to whom he sent the requisite instructions. The vessel sailed—off St. Domingo she carried away a mast—tried to Fetch Carthagena under a jury-spar —fell to leeward, and finally brought up at Honduras.

"Three months after, Isaac encountered the master of the schooner in the streets of Kington. 'Ah, mine goot Captain—how is you—you looksh tin—ave you been sheek?'—'No, Moses—I am well enough, thank you—poor a bit, but entirely sound in health. You have heard of my having carried away the main-mast, and, after kicking about for fifteen days on short allowance, having been obliged to bear up for Honduras?'—'I know nothing of all dat,' said Isaac; 'sorry for it, Captain—very sad, inteed.'—'Sad—you may say that, Moses. But I am honest although poor, and here is your bill of lading for your two barrels of provisions; "Prime mess," *it* says—damed tough, say I—Howsomdever,' pulling out his purse, 'the present value on Bogle, Jopp, and Co's. wharf is £5, 6s. 8d. the barrel; so there are two doubloons, Moses, and now discharge the account on the back of the bill of lading, will you?'—'Vy should I take payment, Captain? if de' (pork stuck in his throat like 'amen' in Macbeth's,) 'if de barrel ish

lost, it can't be help—de act of God, you know.'—'I am an honest man, Isaac,' continued the captain, 'although a poor one, and I must tell the truth—we carried on with our own as long as it lasted, at length we had to break bulk, and your two barrels being nearest the hatchway, why we ate them first, that's all. But—what has come over you?'—Isaac grew pale as a corpse.—'Oh, mine poor proder, dat you ever was live, to tie in Jamaic—Oh tear, oh tear!'"

"Did they eat the head and hands and"——

"Hold your tongue, Tom Cringle, don't interrupt me, *you* did not eat them; I tell it as it was told to me. So Isaac Grimm," continued Fyall, "was fairly overcome; the kindly feelings of his nature were at length stirred up, and as he turned away, he wept—blew his nose hard, like a Chaldean trumpet in the new moon—and while the large tears coursed each other down his care-worn cheeks, he exclaimed, wringing the captain's hand, in a voice tremulous and scarcely audible from extreme emotion, 'Oh, Isaac Grimm, Isaac Grimm—tid not your heart mishgive you, ven you was commit te great plasphemy of Invoish Ezekiel, who vas of your own flesh and pone—as *por*—de onclean peast I mean. If you hat put Invoish him ash *peef*, surely te eartly tabernacle of him, as always sheet in de high places in te Sinacogue, would never have been allow to pass troo te powels of te pershicuting Nazareen. Ah, mine goot Captain—mine very tear friend—vat—vat—vat av you done wid the cask, Captain?'"

"Oh, most lame and impotent conclusion," sung out the judge, who by this time had become deucedly prosy, and all hands arose, as if by common consent, and agreed that we had got enough.

So off we started in groups.—Fyall, Captain N——, Whiffle, Aaron Bang, and myself, sallied forth in a bunch, pretty well inclined for a lark, you may guess. There are no lamps in the streets in Kingston, and as all the *decent* part of the community are in their *cavies* by half-past nine in the evening, and as it was now "the witching time o' night," there was not a soul in the streets that we saw, except when we passed a solitary town-guard, lurking about some dark corner under the piazzas. These same streets, which were wide and comfortable enough in the daytime, had become unaccountably narrow and intricate since six o'clock in the evening—and, although the object of the party was to convey Captain N—— and myself to our boat at the Ordnance Wharf, it struck me that we were as frequently on a totally different tack.

"I say Cringle, my boy," stuttered out my superior, *Lieutenant* and *Captain* being both drowned *in* and equalized *by* the claret—"why, Tom, Tom Cringle, you dog—don't you hear your superior officer speak, sir, eh?"

My superior officer, during this address, was standing with both arms round a pillar of the piazza.

"I am here, sir," said I.

"Why, I know that; but why don't you speak when I——Hillo—where's Aaron, and Fyall, and the rest, eh?"

They had been attracted by sounds of revelry in a splendid mansion in the next street, which we could see was lit up with great brilliancy, and they had about this time shot about fifty yards a-head of us, working to windward, tack and tack, like Commodore Trunnion.

"Ah, I see," said N——; "let us heave a-head,

Tom—now do you hear?—stand you with your white trowsers against the next pillar."—The ranges supporting the piazza were at distances of about twenty feet from each other.—"Ah, stand there now—I see it."—So he weighed from the one he had tackled to, and, making a staggering bolt of it, he ran up to the pillar against which I stood, whose position was marked by my white vestments, where he again hooked on for a second or two, until I had taken up a new position.

"There, my boy, that's the way to lay out a warp—right in the wind's eye, Tom—we shall fairly beat those lubbers who are tacking in the stream—nothing like warping in the dead water near the shore—mark that down, Tom—never beat in a tide-way when you can warp up along shore in the dead water—D—n the judge's ice"—(hiccough)—"he has poisoned me with that piece he plopped in my last whitewash of Madeira. He a judge! He may be a good crim—criminal judge, but no judge of wine—Why don't you laugh, Tom, eh?—and then his saw—the rasp of a saw I hate—wish it, and a whole nest more, had been in his legal stomach—full of old saws—Shakspeare—he, he—Why don't you laugh, Tom?—Poisoned by the judge, by Jupiter.—Now here we are fairly abreast of them—Hillo!—Fyall, what are you after?"

"Hush, hush," said Fyall, with drunken gravity.

"And hush, hush," said Aaron Bang.

"Come here, Tom, come here;" said Whiffle in a whisper. We were now directly under the piazza of the fine house, in the first floor of which some gay scene was enacting. "Here, Tom, here—now stand

there—hold by that pillar there. I say, N———, give me a lift."

"Can't, Whiffle, can't, for the soul of me, Peregrine, my dear—but I see—I see."

With that the gallant Captain got down on all fours; Whiffle, a small light man, got on his back, and, with the aid of Bang and Fyall, managed to scramble upon my shoulders, where he stood, holding by the window still above, with a foot on each side of my head. His little red face was thus raised flush with the window sill, so that he could see into the piazza on the first floor, which was dark, right through into the magnificent and sparkling drawing-room beyond.

"Now, tell us what's to be seen," said Aaron.

"Stop, stop," rejoined Whiffle—"My eye, what a lot of splendid women—no men—a regular lady party—Hush! a song." A harp was struck, and a symphony of Beethoven's played with great taste—A song, low and melancholy, from two females followed.

"The music of the spheres!" quoth Whiffle.

We were wrapt—we had been inspired before—and, drunk as we were, there we sat or stood, as best suited us, exhibiting the strange sight of a cluster of silent tipsy men. At length, at one of the finest swells, I heard a curious gurgling sound overhead, as if some one was being gagged, and I fancied Peregrine became lighter on my shoulders—Another fine dieaway note—I was sure of it—"Bang, Bang—Fyall—He is evaporating with delight—no weight at all—growing more and more ethereal—lighter and lighter, as I am a gentleman—he is off—going, going, gone—exhaled into the blue heavens, by all that is most wonderful!"

Puzzled beyond measure, I stept hurriedly back,

and capsized over the captain, who was still enacting the joint stool on all-fours behind me, by which Whiffle had mounted to my cross-trees, and there we rolled in the sand, master and man.

"Murdered, Tom Cringle—murdered—you have hogged me like the old Ramilies—broke my back, Tom—spoiled my quadrilling for ever and a day; d—n the judge's ice, though, and his saw particularly."

"Where is he—where is Whiffle?" inquired all hands, in a volley.

"The devil only knows," said I; "he has flown up into the clouds, catch him who can. He has left this earth any how, that is clear."

"Ha, ha!" cried Fyall, in great glee, who had seen him drawn into the window by several white figures, after they had tied a silk handkerchief over his mouth; "follow me, my boys;" and we all scrambled after him to the front door of the house, to which we ascended by a handsome flight of marble steps, and when there, we began to thunder away for admittance. The door was opened by a very respectable-looking elderly gentleman, with well powdered hair, and attended by two men-servants in handsome liveries, carrying lights. His bearing and gentlemanlike deportment had an immediate effect on me, and I believed on the others too. He knew Fyall and Whiffle, it appeared.

"Mr. Fyall," he said, with much gentleness, "I know it is only meant as a frolic, but really I hope you will now end it. Amongst yourselves, gentlemen, this may be all very well, but considering my religion, and the slights we Hebrews are so often exposed to, myself and my family are more sensitive

and pervious to insult than you can well understand."

"My dear fellow," quoth Fyall, "we are all very sorry; the fact is, we had some d—d bad shaddock after dinner, which has made us very giddy and foolish somehow. Do you know, I could almost fancy I had been drinking wine?"

"Cool and deliciously impudent that same, (hiccough,") quoth the skipper.

"But hand us back little Whiffle," continued Fyall, "and we shall be off."

Here Whiffle's voice was heard from the drawing-room.—"Here, Fyall!—Tom Cringle!—Here, here, or I shall be murdered!"

"Ah! I see," said Mr. H., "this way, gentlemen. Come, I will deliver the culprit to you;" and we followed him into the drawing-room, a most magnificent saloon, at least forty feet by thirty, brilliantly lit up with crystal lamps, and massive silver candelabra, and filled with elegant furniture, which was reflected, as well as the chandeliers that hung from the centre of the coach-roof, by several large mirrors, in rich frames, as well as in the highly-polished mahogany floor.

There, in the middle of the room, the other end of it being occupied by a bevy of twelve or fifteen richly-dressed females, visiters, as we conjectured, sat our friend Peregrine, pinioned into a large easy-chair with shawls and scarfs, amidst a sea of silk cushions, by four beautiful young women, black hair and eyes, clear white skins, fine figures, and little clothing. A young jewess is a beautiful animal, although, like the unclean—confound the metaphor—which they abhor—they don't improve by age.

When we entered, the blushing girls, who had been beating Whiffle over his spindle shins with their large garden fans, dashed through a side-door, unable to contain their laughter, which we heard long after they had vanished, echoing along the lofty galleries of the house. Our captive knight being restored to us, we made our bows to the other ladies, who were expiring with laughter, and took our leave, with little Whiffle on our shoulders—the worthy Hebrew, whom I afterwards knew in London, sending his servant and gig with Captain N—— and myself to the wharf. There we tumbled ourselves into the boat, and got on board the Firebrand about three in the morning. We were by this time pretty well sobered; at four a gun was fired, the topsails were let fall, and sheeted home, and topgallant-sails set over them, the ship having previously been hove short; at half-past, the cable being right up and down—another gun—the drums and fifes beat merrily—spin went the capstan, tramp went the men that manned it.—We were under weigh—Eastward, ho!—for *Santiago de Cuba*.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CRUISE OF THE FIREBRAND.

Showing, amongst other pleasant matters, well worthy of being recorded, how Thomas communed with his two Consciences.

———"For I am as a weed,
Flung from the rock, on ocean's foam to sail,
Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail."
Third Canto of Childe Harold.

We had to beat up for three days before we could weather the east end of Jamaica, and tearing work we had of it. I had seen bad weather and heavy seas in several quarters of the globe—I had tumbled about under a close-reefed main-topsail and reefed foresail, on the long seas in the Bay of Biscay—I had been kicked about in a seventy-four, off the Cape of Good Hope, as if she had been a cork—I had been hove hither and thither, by the short jumble of the North Sea, about Heligoland, and the shoals lying off the mouth of the Elbe, when every thing over head was black as thunder, and all beneath as white as snow—I had enjoyed the luxury of being torn in pieces by a north-wester, which compelled us to lie-to for ten days at a stretch, under storm stay-sails, off the coas

of Yankee-land, with a clear, deep, cold, blue sky above us, without a cloud, where the sun shone brightly the whole time by day, and a glorious harvest moon by night, as if they were smiling in derision upon our riven and strained ship, as she reeled to and fro like a wounded Titan; at one time buried in the black trough of the sea, at another cast upwards towards the heavens by the throes of the tormented waters, from the troubled bosom of the bounding and roaring ocean, amidst hundreds of miniature rainbows, (ay, rainbows by night as well as by day,) in a hissing storm of white, foaming, seething spray, torn from the curling and rolling bright green crests of the mountainous billows. And I have had more than one narrow squeak for it in the neighbourhood of the "still vexed Bermoothes," besides various other small affairs, written in this *Boke;* but the devil such another tumblification had I ever experienced, not as to danger, for there was none except to our spars and rigging, but as to discomfort, as I did in that short cross, splashing, and boiling sea, off Morant Point. By noon, however, on the second day, having had a slant from the land-wind in the night previous, we got well to windward of the long sandy spit that forms the east end of the island, and were in the act of getting a small pull of the weather braces, before edging away for St. Jago, when the wind fell suddenly, and in half an hour it was stark calm—"una *furiosa* calma," as the Spanish sailors quaintly enough call it.

We got rolling tackles up, and the topgallant masts down, and studding sails out of the tops, and lessened the lumber and weight aloft in every way we could think of, but, nevertheless, we continued to roll gunwale under, dipping the main-yard-arm into the wa-

ter, every now and then, and setting every thing adrift, below and on deck, that was not bolted down, or otherwise well secured.

When I went down to dinner, the scene was extremely good. Old Yerk, the first lieutenant, was in the chair—one of the boys was jammed at his side, with his claws fastened round the foot of the table, holding a tureen of boiling peas-soup, with lumps of pork swimming in it, which the aforesaid Yerk was baling forth with great assiduity to his messmates. Hydrostatics were much in vogue—the tendency of fluids to regain their equilibrium (confound them, they have often, in the shape of claret, destroyed mine) was beautifully illustrated, as the contents of each carefully balanced soup-plate kept swaying about on the principal of the spirit level. The Doctor was croupier, and as it was a return dinner to the captain, all hands were regularly figged out, the lieutenants, with their epaulets and best coats, and the master, purser, and doctor, all fittingly attired. When I first entered, as I made my obeisance to the captain, I thought I saw an empty seat next him, but the matter of the soup was rather an engrossing concern, and took up my attention, so that I paid no particular regard to the circumstance; however, when we had all discussed the same, and were drinking our first glass of Teneriffe, I raised my eyes to hob and nob with the master, when—ye gods and little fishes—who should they light on, but the merry phiz—merry, alas! no more—of Aaron Bang, Esquire, who, during the soup interlude had slid into the vacant chair unperceived by me.

"Why, Mr. Bang, where, in the name of all that is comical—*where have* you dropped from?" Alas!

poor Aaron—Aaron, in a rolling sea, was of no kindred to Aaron ashore. His rosy gills were no longer rosy—his round plump face seemed to be covered with parchment from an old bass-drum, cut out from the centre where most bronzed by the drumstick—there was no speculation in his eyes that he did glare withal—and his lips, which were usually firm and open, disclosing his nice teeth in frequent grin, were held together, as if he had been in grievous pain. At length he did venture to open them—and, like the ghost of Hamlet's father, "it lifted up its head and did address itself to motion, as it would speak." But they began to quiver, and he once more screwed them together, as if he feared the very exertion of *uttering* a word or two might unsettle his meniplies.

The master was an odd garrulous small man, who had a certain number of stated jokes, which, so long as they were endured, he unmercifully inflicted on his messmates. I had come in for my share, as a new comer, as well as the rest; but even with me, although I had been but recently appointed, they had already begun to pall, and wax wearisome; and blind as the beetle of a body was, he could not help seeing this. So poor Bang, unable to return a shot, sea-sick and crestfallen, offered a target that he could not resist taking aim at. Dinner was half over, and Bang had not eaten any thing, when, unseasonable as the hour was, the little pot-valiant master, primed with two tumblers of grog, in defiance of the captain's presence, fairly fastened on him, like a remora, and pinned him down with one of his long-winded stories, about Captain David Jones, in the Phantome, during a cruise off Cape Flyaway, having run foul of a whale, and thereby nearly foundered; and that at length

having got the monster harpooned and speared, and the devil knows what,—but it ended in getting her alongside, when they scuttled the leviathan, and then, wonderful to relate, found a Greenlander with royal yards crossed in her maw, *and the captain and mate in the cabin quarelling about the reckoning.*

"What do you think of that, Mr. Bang—as well they might, Mr. Bang—as well they might? Bang said nothing, but at the moment—whether the said Aaron lent wings to the bird or no, I cannot tell—a goose swimming in apple sauce, which he was, with a most stern countenance, endeavouring to carve, fetched way right over the gunwale of the dish; and taking a whole boat of melted butter with it, splashed across the table during a tremendous roll, that made every thing creak and groan again right into the small master's lap who was his *vis-a-vis.* I could hear Aaron grumble out something about—"Strange affinity—birds of a feather." But his time was up, his minutes were numbered, and like a shot he bolted from the table, sculling or rather clawing away towards the door by the backs of the chairs, like a green parrot, until he reached the marine at the bottom of the ladder, at the door of the captain's cabin, round whose neck he immediately fetterlocked his fins.

He had only time to exclaim to his new ally, "My dear fellow, get me some brandy and water, for the love of mercy"—when he blew up, with an explosion like the bursting of a steam-boiler—"Oh dear, oh dear," we could hear him murmuring in the lulls of his agony—then another loud report—"there goes my yesterday's supper—hot grog and toasted cheese"—another roar, as if the spirit was leaving its

earthly tabernacle—"Dinner—claret—Madeira—" all cruel bad in a second edition—"Cheese, teal, and ringtail pigeon—black crabs—calapi and turtle-soup" —as his fleshly indulgences of the previous day rose up in judgment against him, like a man's evil deeds on his death-bed. At length the various *strata* of his interior were entirely excavated—"Ah!—I have got to my breakfast—to the simple tea and toast at last."—"Brandy and water, my dear N——, brandy and water, my darling, hot, without sugar"—and "Brandy and water" died in echoes in the distance as he was stowed away into his cot in the captain's cabin. It seems that it had been all arranged between him and N——, that he was to set off for St Thomas in the East, the morning on which we sailed, and to get a shove out in the pilot-boat schooner, from Morant Bay, to join us for the cruise; and accordingly he had come on board the night previous when I was below, and being somewhat qualmish he had wisely kept his cot; the fun of the thing depending, as it seemed, on all hands carefully keeping it from me that he was on board.

I apprehend most people indulge in the fancy that they have *Consciences*—such as they are. I myself, now—even I, Thomas Cringle, Esquire, amongst sundry vain imaginings, conceive that *I* have a *Conscience*—somewhat of the Caoutchouc order I will confess—stretching a little upon occasion, when the gale of my passions blows high—nevertheless, a highly-respectable *Conscience*, as things go—a stalwart unchancy customer, who will not be gainsaid or contradicted; but he may be disobeyed, although never with impunity. It is all true that a young, well-fledged gentlewoman, for she is furnished with a most

swift pair of wings, called *Prosperity*, sometimes gets the better of *Master Conscience*, and smothers the *Grim Feature* for a time, under the bed of eider down, whereon you and her ladyship are reposing. But she is a sad jilt in many instances, this same *Prosperity;* for some fine morning, with the sun glancing in through the crevices of the window-shutters, just at the nick when, after turning yourself, and rubbing your eyes, you courageously thrust forth one leg, with a determination to don your gramashes without more delay—"Tom," says she, "Tom Cringle, I have got tired of you, Thomas; besides, I hear my next door neighbour, Madame Adversity, tirling at the door pin; so give me my down bed, Tom, and I'm off." With that she bangs open the window, and before I recover from my surprise, launches forth, with a loud *whir*, mattress and all, leaving me, Pilgarlic, lying on the paillasse. Well, her nest is scarcely cold, and the mark of her hurdies as yet unobliterated on the substratum of straw, when in comes my Mistress *Adversity*, a wee outspoken—sour—crabbed—*gaizened* anatomy of an old woman—"You *ne'erdoweel*, Tam," quoth she, "is it no enough that you consort with that scarlet limmer, who has just yescaped thorough the winday, but ye maun smoor my first-born, puir *Conscience*, atween ye? Whare hae ye stowed him, man—tell me that?"—And the ancient damosel gives me a shrewd clip on the skull with the poker. "That's right, mother," quoth Conscience, from beneath the straw mattress—"Give it to him—he'll no hear me—another *devvel* mother." And I found that my own weight, deserted as I was by that—ahem—Prosperity, was no longer sufficient to keep him down. So up he rose,

with a loud *pech;* and while the old woman keelhaled me with the poker on one side, he yerked at me on the other, until at length he gave me a regular cross-buttock, and they then between them regularly diddled me outright. When I was fairly floored, "Now, my man," said Adversity, "I bear no spite; if you will but listen to my boy there, we shall be good friends still. He is never unreasonable. He has no objections to your consorting even with Madame Prosperity, in a *decent* way; but he will not consent to your letting her get the better of you, nor to your doting on her, even to the giving her a share of your bed, when she should never be allowed to get farther than the servants' hall, for she should be kept in subjection, or she'll ruin you for ever, Thomas.—Conscience is a rough lad, I grant you, and I am keen and snell also; but never mind, take his advice, and you'll be some credit to your freens yet, ye scoonrel." I did so, and the old lady's visits became shorter and shorter, and more and more distant, until at length they ceased altogether; and once more *Prosperity*, like a dove, with its heaven-borrowed hues all glowing in the morning sun, pitched one morning on my window-sill. It was in June. "Tom, I am come back again." I *glowered* at her with all my bir— "Aiblins ye're a ———" I could not finish the sentence for the soul of me, for the smiling seraph—she was in her sark—had first pushed one naked leg down to the floor, and then another, and—oh my wig —"but we sha'n't have the down bed this time, nor shall we ever, ever any more try to smother honest, honest Conscience." She made a step or two towards me, and the lesson of Adversity was fast evaporating into thin air, when, lo! the sleeping *lion*

himself awoke. "Thomas," said Conscience, in a voice that made my flesh creep, "not into your bed, neither into your bosom, Thomas. Be civil to the young woman, but remember what your best friend Adversity told you, and never let her be more than your handmaiden again; free to come, free to go, but never more to be your mistress." I screw myself about, and twist, and turn in great perplexity—"Hard enough all this, and I am half inclined to try to throttle Conscience outright—But a burnt child, my darling—So step into the breakfast room, Miss Prosperity," and I opened the door, standing in my shirt all the while. She smiled, and made as if she thought I was joking, and first gave me a playful pinch, and then a poke under the small ribs, and looking towards the ——

But to make a long story short—I was resolute—"Step into the parlour, my dearest—I hope we shall never part any more; but you must not get the upper hand, you know. So step into the other room, and whenever I get my inexpressibles on, I will come to you there."

But this *Conscience*, about which I am now *haver-ing*, seldom acts the monitor in this way, unless against respectable crimes, such as murder, debauching your friend's wife, or stealing. But the *chiel* I have to do with for the present, and who has led to this rigmarole, is a sort of *deputy Conscience*, a looker-out after small affairs—peccadilloes. *Grewsome carle, Conscience Senior*, you can grapple with, for he only steps forth on great occasions, when he says sternly—and the mischief is, that what he says, we know to be true—says he, "Thomas Cringle"—he never calls me Tom, or mister, or Lieutenant—

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"Thomas Cringle," says he, "if you do that thing, you shall be damned." "Lud-a-mercy," quoth I, Thomas, "I will perpend, Master Conscience"—and I set myself to eschew the evil deed, with all my might. *Conscience the Younger*—who I will take leave to call by Quashie's appellative hereafter, *Conshy*—is a funny little fellow, and another guess sort of a chap altogether. An instance—"I say, Tom, my boy—Tom Cringle—why the *deuce* now"—he won't say "the Devil" for the world—"Why the deuce, Tom, don't you confine yourself to a pint of wine at dinner, eh?" quoth *Conshy*. "Why will you not give up your toddy after it? You are ruining your interior, Thomas, my fine fellow—the gout is on the look-out for you—your legs are spindling, and your paunch is increasing. Read Hamlet's speech to Polonius, Tom, and if you don't find all the marks of premature old age creeping on you, then am I, *Conshy* a Dutchman, that's all."

Now *Conshy* always lectures you in the watches of the night; I generally think his advice is good at breakfast-time, and during the forenoon, I think it excellent and most reasonable, and I determine to stick by it—and if *Conshy* and I dine alone, I do adhere to his maxims most rigidly; but if any of my old allies should topple in to dinner, *Conshy*, who is a solitary mechanic, bolts instanter. Still I remember him for a time—we sit down—the dinner is good. "I say Jack, a glass of wine—Peter, what shall we have?" and until the pint apiece is discussed, all is right between Conshy and I. But then comes some grouse. Hook, in his double-refined nonsense, palavers about the blasphemy of *white* wine after *brown* game—and he is not far wrong either; at last I never

thought he was, *so long as my Hermitage lasted;* but at the time I speak of, it was still to the fore—so the moment the pint apiece was out, "Hold hard, Tom, now," cheeps little Conshy. "Why, only one glass of Hermitage, Conshy." *Conshy* shakes his head. Cheese—after the manner of the ancients—Hook again—"Only one glass of port, *Conshy*." He shakes his head, and at length the cloth is drawn, and a confounded old steward of mine, who is now installed as butler, brings in the crystal decanters, sparkling to the wax-lights—poor as I am, I detest mutton fats—and every thing as it should be, down to a finger glass. "Now, Mary, where are the children?" I am resolute. "Jack, I can't drink—out of sorts, my boy—so mind yourself, you and Peter. Now, *Conshy*," says I, "where are you *now*, my boy?" But just at this instant, Jack strikes out, with "Cringle, order me a tumbler—something hot—I don't care what it is."—"Ditto," quoth Peter; and down crumbles all my fine fabric of resolutions, only to be rebuilt to-morrow, before breakfast again, or at any odd moment, when one's flesh is somewhat fishified. Another instance. "I say, Tom," says *Conshy*, "do give over looking at that smart girl tripping it along t'other side of the street."—"Presently, my dear little man," says I. "Tight little woman that, Conshy; handsome bows; good bearings forward; tumbles home sweetly about the waist, and tumbles out well above the hips; what a beautiful run! and spars clean and tight; back-stays well set up."—"Now, Tom, you vagabond, give over. Have you not a wife of your own?"—"To be sure I have, Conshy, my darling; but *toujours per*."—"Have done now; you

are going too far," says Conshy.—"Oh, you be——" "THOMAS," cries a still stern voice, from the very inmost recesses of my heart. Wee Conshy holds up his finger, and pricks his ear. "Do you hear him?" says he.—"I hear," says I, "*I hear and tremble.*" Now, to apply. Conshy has been knudging me for this half hour, to hold my tongue regarding Aaron Bang's sea sickness.—"It is absolutely indecent," quoth he.—"Can't help it, Conshy; no more than the extra tumbler; those who are delicate need not read it; those who are indelicate won't be the worse of it."

"But," persists *Conshy*—"I have other hairs in your neck, Master Tommy—you are growing a bit of a buffoon on us, and, sorry am I to say it, sometimes not altogether, as a man with a rank imagination may construe you, a very decent one. Now, my good boy, I would have you to remember that what you write, is *condemned* in the pages of Old Christopher, to an *amber immortalization*," (Ohon for the Provost!) "nay, don't perk and smile, I mean no compliment, for you are but the *straw* in the *amber*, Tom, and the only wonder is, *how* the deuce you got there."

"But, my dear *Conshy*"——

"Hold your tongue, Tom—let me say out my say, and finish my advice—and how will you answer to my father, in your old age, when youth, and health, and wealth may have flown, if you find any thing in this, your Log, calculated to bring a blush on an innocent cheek, Tom, when the time shall have for ever passed away wherein you could have remedied the injury? For *Conscience will* speak to you then,

not as I do now, in friendly confidence, and impelled by a sincere regard for you, you right-hearted, but thoughtless, slap-dash vagabond."

There must have been a great deal of absurd perplexity in my visage, as I sat receiving my rebuke, for I noticed *Conshy* smile, which gave me courage.

"I will reform, *Conshy*, and that immediately; but my *moral* is good, man."

"Well, well, Tom, I will take you at your word, so set about it, set about it."

"But, *Conshy*—a word in your starboard *lug*—why don't you go to the fountain-head—why don't you try your hand in a curtain lecture on old Kit North himself, the hoary sinner who seduced me?"

Conshy could no longer contain himself; the very idea of old Kit having a *conscience* of any kind or description whatever, so tickled him, that he burst into a most uproarious fit of laughter, which I was in great hopes would have choked him, and thus made me well quit of him for ever. For some time I listened in great amazement, but there was something so infectious in his fun, that presently I began to laugh too, which only increased his cachinnation, so there were *Conshy* and I roaring and shouting, with the tears running down our cheeks.

"Kit listen to me?—Oh, d——"

"You are swearing, *Conshy*," said I, rubbing my hands at having caught *him* tripping.

"And enough to make a quaker swear," quoth he, still laughing. "No, no, Kit never listens to me—why, he would never listen even to my father, until the gout and the Catholic Relief bill, and last of all, the Reform bill, broke him down, and softened his heart."

So there is an allegory for you, worthy of John Bunyan; and this is what I call metaphysics.

Next morning we got the breeze again, when we bore away for Santiago de Cuba, and arrived off the Moro Castle on the fifth evening at sunset, after leaving Port Royal harbour. The Spaniards, in their better days, were a kind of coral worms; wherever they planted their colonies, they immediately set to covering themselves in with stone and mortar; applying their own entire energies, and the whole strength of their Indian captives, first, to the erection of a fort; their second object (postponed to the other only through absolute necessity) being then to build a temple to their God. Gradually, vast fabrics appeared, where before there was nothing but one eternal forest, or a howling wilderness; and, although it does come over one, when looking at the splendid moles, and firm-built bastions, and stupendous churches of the New World—the latter surpassing, or, at the least, equalling in magnificence and grandeur those of Old Spain herself—that they are all cemented by the blood and sweat of millions of gentle Indians, of whose harmless existence, in many quarters, they remain the only monuments, still it is a melancholy reflection to look back and picture to one's self what Spain was, and to compare her, in her high and palmy state, with what she is now; with what she was, even when, as a young midshipman, I first visited her glorious transatlantic colonies.

Until the Peninsula was overrun by the French, Buenos Ayres, Laguayra, Porto Cavello, Maracaibo, Santa Martha, and that strong-hold of the west, the key of the Isthmus of Darien, Cartagena de las Indias, with Porto Bello, and Vera Cruz, on the Atlan-

tic shores of South America, were all prosperous and happy "*Llenas de plata;*" and on the western coast, Valparaiso, Lima, Panama, and San Blas, were thriving and increasing in population and wealth England, through her colonies, was, at that time, driving a lucrative trade with all of them; but the demon of change was abroad, blown thither by the pestilent breath of European liberalism. What a vineyard for Abbé Sieyes to have laboured in! Every *Capitania* would have become a purchaser of one of his cut and dried constitutions. Indeed, he could not have turned them out of hand fast enough. The enlightened *few*, in these countries, were as a drop in the bucket to the unenlightened *many*; and although, no doubt, there were numbers of the former who were well meaning men, yet they were one and all guilty of that prime political blunder, in common with our Whig friends at home, of expecting a set of semi-barbarians to see the beauty of, and to conform to their new-fangled codes of free institutions, for which they were as ready as I am to die at this present moment. Bolivar, in his early fever of patriotism, made the same mistake, although his shrewd mind in his later career, saw that a despotism, *pure* or *impure*—I will not qualify it—was your only government for the *savages* he had at one time dignified with the name of fellow patriots. But he came to this wholesome conclusion too late; he tried back, it is true, but it would not do; the fiend had been unchained, and, at length, hunted him, broken-hearted, into his grave.

But the men of mind tell us, that those countries are now going through the *political fermentation*, which, by and by will clear, when the sediment will

be deposited, and the different ranks will each take their acknowledged and undisputed stations in society; and the United States are once and again quoted against we of the adverse faction, as if there were the most remote analogy between their population, originally composed of all the *cleverest scoundrels* of Europe, and the barbarians of Spanish America, where a few master spirits, all old Spaniards, did, indeed, for a season, stick fiery off from the dark mass of savages amongst whom their lot was cast, like stars in a moonless night, but only to suffer a speedy eclipse from the clouds and storm which they themselves had set in motion. We shall see. The *scum*, as yet, is uppermost, and does not seem likely to *subside*, but it may *boil over*. In Cuba, however, all was at the time quiet, and still is, I believe, prosperous, and that too, without having come through this said blessed political fermentation.

During the night we stood off and on under easy sail, and next morning, when the day broke, with a strong breeze and a fresh shower, we were about two miles off the Moro Castle, at the entrance of Santiago de Cuba.

I went aloft to look round me. The sea breeze blew strong, until it reached within half a mile of the shore, where it stopped short, shooting in cat's paws occasionally into the smooth belt of water beyond, where the long unbroken swell rolled like molten silver in the rising sun, without a ripple on its surface, until it dashed its gigantic undulations against the face of the precipitous cliffs on the shore, and flew up in smoke. The entrance to the harbour is very narrow, and looked from my perch like a zig-zag chasm in the rock, inlaid at the bottom with polished blue

steel; so clear, and calm, and pellucid was the still water, wherein the frowning rocks, and magnificent trees on the banks, and the white Moro, rising with its grinning tiers of cannon, battery above battery, were reflected *veluti in speculum*, as if it had been in a mirror.

We had fired a gun, and the signal for a pilot was flying, when the Captain hailed me. "Does the sea-breeze blow into the harbour yet, Mr. Cringle?"

"Not yet, sir; but it is creeping in fast."

"Very well. Let me know when we can run in. Mr. Yerk, back the main-topsail, and heave the ship to."

Presently, the pilot canoe, with the Spanish flag flying in the stern, came alongside; and the pilot, a tall brown man, a *Moreno*, as the Spaniards say, came on board. He wore a glazed cocked hat, which was rather an out of the way finish to his figure, which was rigged in a simple Osnaburg shirt, and pair of trousers. He came on the quarter-deck, and made his bow to the captain with all the ease in the world, wished him a good morning, and taking his place by the quarter-master at the cunn, he took charge of the ship. "Senor," quoth he to me, "is de harbour blow up yet? I mean, you see de *viento* walking into him. De Terral—dat is land-wind; has he cease?"

"No," I answered; "the belt of smooth water is growing narrower fast; but the sea breeze does not blow into the channel yet. Now it has reached the entrance."

"Ah, den make sail, Senor Capitan; fill de main-topsail." We stood in, the scene becoming more and more magnificent as we approached the land.

The fresh green shores of this glorious island lay before us, fringed with white surf, as the everlasting ocean, in its approach to it, gradually changed its dark blue colour, as the water shoaled, into a bright, joyous green, under the blazing sun, as if in sympathy with the genius of the fair land, before it tumbled at his feet its gently swelling billows, in shaking thunders on the reefs and rocky face of the coast, against which they were driven up in clouds, the incense of their sacrifice. The undulating hills in the vicinity were all either cleared, and covered with the greenest verdure that imagination can picture, over which strayed large herds of cattle, or with forests of gigantic trees, from amongst which, every now and then, peeped out some palm-thatched mountain settlement, with its small thread of blue smoke floating up into the calm clear morning air, while the blue hills in the distance rose higher and higher, and more and more blue, and dreamy, and indistinct, until their rugged summits could not be distinguished from the clouds through the glimmering hot haze of the tropics.

"By the mark seven," sung out the leadsman, in the starboard chains.—"Quarter less three," responded he in the larboard, showing that the inequalities of the surface at the bottom of the sea, even in the breadth of the ship, were, at least, as abrupt as those presented above water by the sides of the natural canal into which we were now running. By this time, on our right hand, we were within pistol shot of the Moro, where the channel is not above fifty yards across; indeed, there is a chain made fast to a rock on the opposite side, that can be hove up by a capstan, until it is level with the water, so as to consti-

tute an insurmountable obstacle to any attempt to force an entrance in time of war. As we stood in, the golden flag of Spain rose slowly on the staff at the Water Battery, and cast its large sleepy folds abroad in the breeze; but, instead of floating over mail-clad men, or Spanish soldiers in warlike array, three poor devils of half naked mulattoes stuck their heads out of an embrasure under its shadow: "Senor Capitan," they shouted, "*una Botella de Roma, por el honor del pais.*" We were mighty close upon leaving the bones of the old ship here, by the by; for at the very instant of entering the harbour's mouth, the land-wind checked us off, and very nearly hove us, broadside, on upon the rocks below the castle, against which the swell was breaking in thunder.

"Let go the anchor," sung out the captain.

"All gone sir," promptly responded the boatswain, from the forecastle. And, as he spoke, we struck once, twice, and very heavily the third time. But, the breeze coming in strong, we fetched way again; and, as the cable was promptly cut, we got safely off. On weighing the anchor afterwards, we found the water had been so shoal under the bows, that the ship, when she stranded, had struck it, and broken the stock short off by the ring. The only laughable part of the story consisted in the old cook, an Irishman, with one leg, and half an eye, scrambling out of the galley nearly naked, in his trousers, shirt, and greasy night-cap, and sprawling on all fours after two tubs-full of yams, which the third thump had capsized all over the deck. "Oh, you scurvy looking tief," said he, eyeing the pilot; "if it was running us ashore you were set on, why the blazes couldn't ye wait until the yams were in the

copper, bad luck to ye—and them all scraped too! I do believe, *if they even had been taties, it would have been all the same to you.*" We stood on, the channel narrowing still more—the rocks rising to a height of, at least, five hundred feet from the water's edge, as sharply and precipitously, as if they had only yesterday been split asunder; the splintered projections and pinnacles on one side, having each their corresponding fissures and indentations on the other, as if the hand of a giant could have closed them together again.

Noble trees shot out in all directions, wherever they could find a little earth, and a crevice to hold on by, almost meeting overhead in several places, and alive with all kinds of birds and beasts incidental to the climate;—parrots of all sorts, great and small, *clomb*, and hung, and fluttered amongst the branches; and pigeons of numberless varieties; and the glancing woodpecker, with his small hammer-like *tap, tap, tap;* and the West India nightingale, and humming-birds of all hues; while cranes, black, white, and gray, frightened from their fishing-stations, stalked, and peeped about, as awkwardly as a warrant-officer in his long-skirted coat on a Sunday; while whole flocks of ducks flew across the mast-heads, and through the rigging; and the dragon-like guanas, and lizards of many kinds disported themselves amongst the branches, not lazily, or loathsomely, as we, who have only seen a lizard in our cold climate, are apt to picture, but alert, and quick as lightning, their colours changing with the changing light, or the hues of the objects to which they clung, becoming literally, in one respect, portions of the landscape.

And then the dark, transparent crystal depth of

the pure waters under foot, reflecting all nature so steadily and distinctly, that, in the hollows, where the overhanging foliage of the laurel-like bushes darkened the scene, you could not, for your life, tell where the elements met, so blended were earth and sea.

"Starboard," said I. I had now come on deck. "Starboard, or the main-top-gallant-mast-head *will be foul of the limb of that tree.* Foretop there—lie out on the larboard fore-yard-arm, and be ready to shove her off, if she sheers too close."

"Let go the anchor," struck in the first lieutenant.

Splash—the cable rumbled through the hause-hole.

"Now here are we brought up in paradise," quoth the doctor.

"Curukity coo—curukity coo," sung out a great bushy-whiskered sailor from the crow's nest, who turned out to be no other than our old friend Timothy Tailtackle, quite juvenilified by the laughing scene. "Here am I, Jack, a booby amongst the singing-birds," crowed he to one of his messmates in the maintop, as he clutched a branch of a tree in his hand, and swung himself up into it. But the ship, as old Nick would have it, at the very instant dropped astern a few yards in swinging to her anchor, and that so suddenly that she left him on his perch in the tree, converting his jest, poor fellow, into melancholy earnest. "Oh, dear sir!" sung out Timotheus, in a great quandary. "Captain, do heave a-head a bit—Murder—I shall never get down again! Do, Mr. Yerk, if you please, sir!" And there he sat twisting and craning himself about, and screwing his features into combinations evincing the most comical perplexity.

The captain, by way of a bit of fun, pretended not to hear him.

"Maintop there," quoth he.

The midshipman in the top answered him, "Aye, aye, sir."

"Not you, Mr. Reefpoint; the captain of the top I want."

"He is not in the top, sir," responded little Reefpoint, chuckling like to choke himself.

"Where the devil is he, sir?"

"*Here*, sir," squeeled Timothy, his usual gruff voice spindling into a small *cheep* through his great perplexity. "*Here*, sir."

"What are you doing there, sir? Come down this moment, sir. Rig out the main-topmast-studding-sail-boom, Mr. Reefpoint, and tell him to slew himself down by that long water-withe."

To hear was to obey. Poor Timothy clambered down to the fork of the tree, from which the withe depended, and immediately began to warp himself down, until he reached within three or four yards of the starboard foretopsail-yardarm; but the corvette *still* dropped astern, so that, after a vain attempt to hook on by his feet, he swung off into mid air, hanging by his hands.

It was no longer a joke. "Here, you black fellows in the pilot-canoe," shouted the captain, as he threw them a rope himself. "Pass the end of that line round the stump yonder—that one below the cliff, there—now pull like devils, pull."

They did not understand a word he said; but, comprehending his gestures, did what he wished.

"Now haul on the line, men—gently, that will do. Missed it again," continued the skipper, as the poor

fellow once more made a fruitless attempt to swing himself on to the yard.

"Pay out the warp again," sung out Tailtackle—"quick, quick, let the ship swing from under, and leave me scope to dive, or I shall be obliged to let go, and be killed on the deck."

"Yes, yes," cried N——, with trepidation, "stick out the warp; let her swing to her anchor!"

In an instant all eyes were again fastened with intense anxiety on the poor fellow, whose strength was fast failing, and his grasp plainly relaxing.

"See all clear to pick me up, messmates."

Tailtackle slipped down to the extreme end of the black withe, that looked like a scorched snake, closed his legs close together, pointing his toes downwards, and then steadying himself for a moment, with his hands right above his head, and his arms at the full stretch, he dropped, struck the water fairly, entering its dark blue depths without a splash, and instantly disappeared, leaving a white frothy mark on the surface.

"Did you ever see any thing better done?" said Yerk. "Why he clipped into the water with the speed of light, as clean and clear as if he had been a marlinspike."

"Thank heaven!" gasped the captain, for if he had struck the water horizontally, or fallen headlong, he would have been shattered in pieces—every bone would have been broken—he would have been as completely smashed as if he had dropped upon one of the limestone rocks on the iron-bound shore.

"Ship, ahoy!" We were all breathlessly looking over the side where he fell, expecting to see him rise again; but the hail came from the water on t'other

side. "Ship, ahoy—throw me a rope, good people—a rope, if you please. Do you mean to careen the ship, that you have all run to the starboard side, leaving me to be drowned to port here?"

"Ah, Tailtackle! well done, old boy," sung out a volley of voices, men and officers, rejoiced to see the honest fellow alive. He clambered on board, in the bight of one of twenty ropes that were hove to him.

When he came on deck the captain slily said, "I don't think you'll go a birdnesting in a hurry again, Tailtackle."

Tim looked with a most quizzical expression at his captain, all blue and breathless and dripping as he was; and then sticking his tongue slightly in his cheek, he turned away, without addressing him directly, but murmuring as he went, "A glass of grog now?"

The captain, with whom he was a favourite, took the hint. "Go below now, and turn in till eight bells, Tailtackle. Mafame," to his steward, "send him a glass of hot brandy grog."

"A northwester," whispered Tim aside to the functionary; "half and half, tallow chops—eh!"

About an hour after this a very melancholy accident happened to a poor boy on board, of about fifteen years of age, who had already become a great favourite of mine from his modest, quiet deportment, as well as of all the gunroom officers, although he had not been above a fortnight in the ship. He had let himself down over the bows by the cable to bathe. There were several of his comrades standing on the forecastle looking at him, and he asked one of them to go out on the spritsail-yard, and look round to see if there were any sharks in the neighbourhood; but all

around was deep, clear, green water. He kept hold of the cable, however, and seemed determined not to put himself in harm's way, until a little wicked urchin, who used to wait on the warrant-officers' mess, a small meddling snipe of a creature, who got flogged in well behaved weeks *only* once, began to taunt my little mild favourite.

"Why, you chicken-heart, I'll wager a thimbleful of grog, that such a tailor as you are in the water can't for the life of you swim out to the buoy there."

"Never you mind, Pepperbottom," said the boy, giving the imp the name he had richly earned by repeated flagellations. "Never you mind. *I* am not ashamed to show my naked hide, you know. But it is against orders in these seas to go overboard, unless with a sail underfoot; so I sha'n't run the risk of being tatooed by the boatswain's mate, like some one I could tell of."

"Coward," muttered the little wasp, "you are afraid, sir;" and the other boys abetting the mischief-maker, the lad was goaded to leave his hold of the cable, and strike out for the buoy. He reached it, and then turned, and pulled towards the ship again, when he caught my eye.

"Who is that overboard? How dare you, sir, disobey the standing order of the ship? Come in, boy; come in."

My hailing the little fellow shoved him off his balance, and he lost his presence of mind for a moment or two, during which he, if any thing, widened his distance from the ship.

At this instant the lad on the sprit-sail-yard sung out quick and suddenly, "A shark, a shark!"

And the monster, like a silver pillar, suddenly

shot up perpendicularly from out of the dark green depths of the sleeping pool, with the waters sparkling and hissing around him, as if he had been a sea-demon rushing on his prey.

"Pull for the cable, Louis," shouted fifty voices at once—"pull for the cable."

The boy did so—we all ran forward. He reached the cable—grasped it with both hands, and hung on, but before he could swing himself out of the water, the fierce fish had turned. His whitish-green belly glanced in the sun—the poor little fellow gave a heart-splitting yell, which was shattered amongst the impending rocks into piercing echoes, and these again were reverberated from cavern to cavern, until they died away amongst the hollows in the distance, as if they had been the faint shrieks of the damned—yet he held fast for a second or two—the ravenous tyrant of the sea tug, tugging at him, till the stiff, taught cable shook again. At length he was torn from his hold, but did not disappear; the animal continuing on the surface crunching his prey with his teeth, and digging at him with his jaws, as if trying to gorge a morsel too large to be swallowed, and making the water flash up in foam over the boats in pursuit, by the powerful strokes of his tail, but without ever letting go his hold. The poor lad only cried once more—but such a cry—oh, I never shall forget it!—and, could it be possible, in his last shriek, his piercing expiring cry, his young voice seemed to pronounce my name—at least so I thought at the time, and others thought so too. The next moment he appeared quite dead. No less than three boats had been in the water alongside when the accident happened, and they were all on the spot by this time. And there

was the bleeding and mangled boy, torn along the surface of the water by the shark, with the boats in pursuit, leaving a long stream of blood, mottled with white specks of fat and marrow in his wake. At length the man in the bow of the gig laid hold of him by the arm, another sailor caught the other arm, boat-hooks and oars were dug into and launched at the monster, who relinquished his prey at last, stripping off the flesh, however, from the upper part of the right thigh, until his teeth reached the knee, where he nipped the shank clean off, and made sail with the leg in his jaws.

Poor little Louis never once moved after we took him in.—I thought I heard a small stern voice thrill along my nerves, as if an echo of the beating of my heart had become articulate. "Thomas, a fortnight ago, who impressed that poor boy, who *was*, and *now is not*, out of a Bristol ship." Alas, conscience spoke no more than the truth.

Our instructions were to lie at St. Jago, until three British ships, then loading, were ready for sea, and then to convey them through the Caicos, or windward passage. As our stay was therefore likely to be ten days or a fortnight at the shortest, the boats were hoisted out, and we made our little arrangements and preparations for taking all the recreation in our power, and our worthy skipper, taught and stiff as he was at sea, always encouraged all kinds of fun and larking, both amongst the men and the officers, on occasions like the present. Amongst his other pleasant qualities, he was a great boat-racer, constantly building and altering gigs, and pulling-boats, at his own expense, and matching the men against each other for small prizes. He had just finished what the old carpenter

considered his *chef-d'œuvre*, and a curious affair this same masterpiece was. In the first place it was forty-two feet long over all, and only three and a half feet beam—the planking was not much above an eighth of an inch in thickness, so that if one of the crew had slipped his foot off the stretcher, it must have gone through the bottom. There was a standing order that no man was to go into it with shoes on. She was to pull six oars, and her crew were the captains of the tops, the primest seamen in the ship, and the steersman no less a character than the skipper himself.

Her name, for I love to be particular, was the Dragon-fly; she was painted out and in of a bright red, amounting to a flame colour—oars red—the men wearing trousers and shirts of red flannel, and red net night-caps—which common uniform the captain himself wore. I think I have said before, that he was a very handsome man, and when he had taken his seat and the *gigs*, all fine men, were seated each with his oar held upright upon his knees ready to be dropped into the water at the same instant, the craft and her crew formed to my eye as pretty a plaything for grown children as ever was seen. "Give way, men," the oars dipped as clean as so many knives, without a sparkle, the gallant fellows stretched out, and away shot the Dragon-fly, like an arrow, the green water foaming into white smoke at the bows, and hissing away in her wake.

She disappeared in a twinkling round a reach of the canal where we were anchored, and we, the officers, for we must needs have our boat also, were making ready to be off, to have a shot at some beautiful cranes that, floating on their large pinions, slowly

passed us with their long legs stuck straight out astern, and their longer necks gathered into their crops, when we heard a loud shouting in the direction where the captain's boat had vanished. Presently the Devil's Darning Needle, as the Scotch part of the crew loved to call the Dragon-fly, struck her long snout round the headland, and came spinning along with a Spanish canoe manned by four negroes, and steered by an elderly gentleman, a sharp acute-looking little man, in a gingham coat, in her wake, also pulling very fast; however, the Don seemed dead beat, and the captain was in great glee. By this time, both boats were alongside, and the old Spaniard, Don Ricardo Campana, addressed the captain, judging that he was one of the seamen. "Is the captain on board?" said he in Spanish. The captain, who understood the language, but did not speak it, answered him in French, which Don Ricardo seemed to speak fluently, "No, sir, the captain is not on board; but there is Mr. Yerk, the first lieutenant, at the gangway." He had come for the letter-bag, he said, and if we had any newspapers, and could spare them, it would be conferring a great favour on him.

He got his letters and newspapers handed down, and very civilly gave the captain a dollar, who touched his cap, tipped the money to the men, and winking slightly to old Yerk and the rest of us, addressed himself to shove off. The old Don, drawing up his eyebrows a little, (I *guess* he rather saw who was who, for all his make-believe innocence,) bowed to the officers at the gangway, sat down, and desiring his people to use their broad-bladed, clumsy-looking oars, or paddles, began to move awkwardly away.—We, that is the gunroom-officers, all except the se-

cond lieutenant, who had the watch, and the master, now got into our own gig also, rowed by ourselves, and away we all went in a covey; the purser and doctor, and three of the middies forward, Thomas Cringle, gent., pulling the stroke oar, with old Moses Yerk as coxswain;—and as the Dragon-flies were all red, so we were all sea-green, boat oars, trousers, shirts, and nightcaps. We soon distanced the cumbrous-looking Don, and the strain was between the *Devil's Darning Needle* and our boat, the *Watersprite*, which was making capital play, for although we had not the *bottom* of the *top*men, yet we had more blood, so to speak, and we had already beaten them, in their last gig, all to sticks. But Dragon-fly was a new boat, and now in the water for the first time.

We were both of us so intent on our own match, that we lost sight of the Spaniard altogether, and the captain and the first lieutenant were bobbing in the sternsheets of their respective gigs like a couple of *souple Tams*, as intent on the game as if all our lives had depended on it, when in an instant the long black dirty prow of the canoe was thrust in between us, the old Don singing out, "*Dexa mi lugar, paysanos, dexa mi lugar, mis hijos!*" * We kept away right and left, to look at the miracle;—and there lay the canoe, rumbling and splashing, with her crew walloping about, and grinning and yelling like incarnate fiends, and as naked as the day they were born, and the old Don himself, so staid and sedate, and drawley as he was a minute before, now all alive, shouting, "*Tira diablitos, tira,*"† flourishing a small

* "Leave me room, countrymen!—leave me room, my children!"

† Equivalent to "Pull, you devils, pull!"

paddle, with which he steered, about his head like a wheel, and dancing and jumping about in his seat, as if his bottom had been a *haggis* with quicksilver in it.

"Zounds," roared the skipper,—"why, topmen—why, gentlemen, give way for the honour of the ship—Gentlemen, stretch out—Men, pull like devils; twenty pounds if you beat him."

We pulled, and they pulled, and the water roared, and the men strained their muscles and sinews to cracking; and all was splash, splash, and *whiz, whiz*, and *pech, pech*, about us, *but it would not do*—the canoe headed us like a shot, and in passing, the cool old Don again subsided into a calm as suddenly as he had been roused from it, and sitting once more, stiff as a poker, and turned round and touched his *sombrero*, "I will tell that you are coming, gentlemen."

It was now the evening, near nightfall, and we had been so intent on beating our awkward-looking opponent, that we had none of us time to look at the splendid scene that burst upon our view, on rounding a precipitous rock, from the crevices of which some magnificent trees shot up—their gnarled trunks and twisted branches overhanging the canal where we were pulling, and anticipating the fast falling darkness that was creeping over the fair face of nature; and there we floated, in the deep shadow of the cliff and trees—Dragonflies and Watersprites, motionless and silent, and the boats floating so lightly that they scarcely seemed to touch the water, the men resting on their oars, and all of us wrapped with the magnificence of the scenery around us, beneath us, and above us.

The left or western bank of the narrow entrance

to the harbour, from which we were now debouching, ran out in all its precipitousness and beauty, (with its dark evergreen bushes overshadowing the deep blue waters, and its gigantic trees shooting forth high into the glowing western sky, their topmost branches gold-tipped in the flood of radiance shed by the rapidly sinking sun, while all below where we lay was gray cold shade,) until it joined the northern shore, when it sloped away gradually towards the east; the higher parts of the town sparkling in the evening sun, on this dun ridge, like a golden tower on the back of an elephant, while the houses that were in the shade covered the declivity, until it sank down to the water's edge. On the right hand the haven opened boldly out into a basin about four miles broad by seven long, in which the placid waters spread out beyond the shadow of the western bank into one vast sheet of molten gold, with the canoe tearing along the shining surface, her side glancing in the sun, and her paddles flashing back his rays, and leaving a long train of living fire sparkling in her wake.—It was now about six o'clock in the evening; the sun had set to us, as we pulled along under the frowning brow of the cliff, where the birds were fast settling on their nightly perches, with small happy twitterings, and the lizards and numberless other chirping things began to send forth their evening hymn to the great Being who made them and us, and a solitary white sailing owl would every now and then flit spectrelike from one green tuft, across the bald face of the cliff, to another, and the small divers around us were breaking up the black surface of the waters into little sparkling circles as they fished for their suppers. All was becoming brown and indistinct near us; but the level

-ams of the setting sun still lingered with a golden radiance upon the lovely city, and the shipping at anchor before it, making their sails, were loosed to dry, glance like leaves of gold, and their spars, and masts, and rigging like wires of gold, and gilding their flags, which were waving majestically and slowly from the peaks in the evening breeze; and the Moorish-looking steeples of the churches were yet sparkling in the glorious blaze, which was gradually deepening into gorgeous crimson, while the large pillars of the cathedral, then building on the highest part of the ridge, stood out like brazen monuments, softening even as we looked into a Stonehenge of amethysts. One half of every object, shipping, houses, trees, and hills, was gloriously illuminated; but even as we looked, the lower part of the town gradually sank into darkness, and faded from our sight—the deepening gloom cast by the high bank above us, like the dark shadow of a bad spirit, gradually crept on, and on, and extended farther and farther; the sailing water-fowl in long lines, no longer made the water flash up like flame; the russet mantle of eve was fast extending over the entire hemisphere; the glancing minarets and the tallest trees, and the topgallant-yards and masts of the shipping alone flashed back the dying effulgence of the glorious orb, which every moment grew fainter and fainter, and redder and redder, until it shaded into purple, and the loud deep bell of the convent of La Merced swung over the still waters, announcing the arrival of even-song, and the departure of day.

"Had we not better pull back to supper, sir?" quoth Moses Yerk to the captain. We all started, the men dipped their oars, our dreams were dispelled, the charm was broken—"Confound the matter-of-

fact blockhead," or something very like it, grumbled the captain—"but give way, men," fast followed, and we returned towards the ship. We had not pulled fifty yards, when we heard the distant rattle of the muskets of the sentries at the gangways, as they discharged them at sundown, and were remarking, as we were rowing leisurely along, upon the strange effect produced by the reports, as they were frittered away amongst the overhanging cliffs in chattering reverberations, when the captain suddenly sung out, "Oars!" All hands lay on them. "Look there," he continued—"There—between the gigs—saw you ever any thing like that, gentlemen?" We all leant over; and although the boats, from the *way* they had, were skimming along nearer seven than five knots—*there* lay a large shark; he must have been twelve feet long at the shortest, swimming right in the middle, and equidistant from both, and keeping *way* with us most accurately.

He was distinctly visible, from the strong and vivid phosphorescence excited by his rapid motion through the sleeping waters of the dark creek, which lit up his jaws, and head, and whole body; his eyes were especially luminous, while a long wake of sparkles streamed away astern of him from the lashing of his tail. As the boats lost their speed, the luminousness of his appearance faded gradually as he shortened sail, also, until he disappeared altogether. He was then at rest, and suspended motionless in the water, and the only thing that indicated his proximity, was an occasional sparkle from the motion of a fin. We brought the boats nearer together, after pulling a stroke or two, but he seemed to sink as we closed, until at last we could merely distinguish an indistinct

halo far down in the clear black profound. But as we separated, and resumed our original position, he again rose near the surface; and although the ripple and dip of the oars rendered him invisible while we were pulling, yet the moment we again rested on them, there was the monster, like a persecuting fiend, once more right between us, glaring on us, and apparently watching every motion. It was a terrible spectacle, and rendered still more striking by the melancholy occurrence of the forenoon.

"That's the very identical, damnable *baste* himself, as murthured poor little Louis this morning, yeer honour; I knows him from the torn flesh of him under his larboard blinker, sir—just where Wiggens' boat-hook punished him," quoth the Irish captain of the mizzentop.

"A water-kelpie," murmured another of the Captain's gigs, a Scotchman.

The men were evidently alarmed. "Stretch out, men; never mind the shark. He can't jump into the boat, surely," said the skipper. "What the deuce are you afraid of?"

We arrived within pistol-shot of the ship. As we approached, the sentry hailed, "Boat ahoy!"

"Firebrand," sung out the skipper, in reply.

"Man the side—gangway lanterns there," quoth the officer on duty; and by the time we were close to, there were two sidesmen over the side with the man-ropes ready stuck out to our grasp, and two boys with lanterns above them. We got on deck, the officers touching their hats, and speedily the captain dived down the ladder, saying, as he descended, "Mr. Yerk, I shall be happy to see you and your boat's-crew at supper, or rather to a late dinner, at eight

o'clock; but come down a moment as you are. Tail-tackle, bring the gigs into the cabin to get a glass of grog, will you?"

"Ay, ay, sir," responded Timothy. "Down with you, you flaming thieves, and see you don't snort and sniffle in your grog, as if you were in your own mess, like so many pigs slushing at the same trough."

"Now, Tim," rejoined one of the top-men, "who made *you* master of the ceremonies, old Ironfist, eh? Where learnt you your breeding? Among the cockatoos up yonder?"

Tim laughed, who, although he ought to have been in his bed, had taken his seat in the Dragon-fly when her crew were piped over the side in the evening, and thereby subjected himself to a rap over the knuckles from the captain; but where the offence might be said to consist in a too assiduous discharge of his duty, it was easily forgiven, unfortunate as the issue of the race had been. So down we all trundled into the cabin, masters and men. It was brilliantly lighted up—the table sparkling with crystal and wine, and glancing with silver plate; and there on a sofa lay Aaron Bang in all his pristine beauty, and fresh from his toilet, for he had just got out of his cot after an eight-and-forty hour's sojourn therein—nice white neckcloth—white jean waistcoat and trousers, and span-new blue coat. He was reading when we entered; and the captain, in his flame-coloured costume, was close aboard of him before he raised his eyes, and rather staggered him a bit; but when seven sea-green spirits followed, he was exceedingly nonplussed, and then came the six red Dragon-flies, who ranged themselves three on each side of the door, with their net bags in their hands, smoothing down their hair, and sidling

and fidgeting about at finding themselves so far out of their element as the cabin.

"Mafame," said the captain, "a glass of grog a-piece to the Dragon-flies"—and a tumbler of liquid amber, (to borrow from my old friend Cooper,)—sparkled in the large bony claw of each of them. "Now, drink Mr. Bang's health." They, as in duty bound, let fly at our *amigo* in a volley.

"Your health, Mr. Bang."

Aaron sprung from his seat, and made his salam, and the Dragon-flies bundled out of the cabin again.

"I say, N——, John Canoeing still—always some frolic in the wind."

We, the water-sprites, had shifted and rigged, and were all mustered aft on the poop, enjoying the little air there was, as it fanned us gently, and waiting for the announcement of supper. It was a pitch dark night, neither moon nor stars. The murky clouds seemed to have settled down on the mast-heads, shrouding every object in the thickest gloom.

"Ready with the gun forward there, Mr. Catwell?" said Yerk.

"All ready, sir."

"Fire!"

Pent up as we were in a narrow channel, walled in on each side with towering precipitous rocks, the explosion, multiplied by the echoes into a whole broadside, was tremendous, and absolutely deafening.

The cold, gray, threatening rocks, and the large overhanging twisted branches of the trees, and the clear black water, and the white Moro in the distance, glanced for an instant, and then all was again veiled in utter darkness, and down came a rattling shower of sand and stones from the cliffs, and of rot-

ten branches, and heavy dew from the trees, sparkling in the water like a shower of diamonds; and the birds of the air screamed, and frightened from their nests and perches in crevices, and on the boughs of the trees, took flight with a strong rushing noise. that put one in mind of the rising of the fallen angels from the infernal council in Paradise Lost; and the cattle on the mountain-side lowed, and the fish, large and small, like darts, and arrows of fire, sparkled up from the black abyss of waters, and swam in haloes of flame round the ship in every direction, as if they had been the ghosts of a shipwrecked crew, haunting the scene of their destruction; and the guanas and large lizards which had been shaken from the trees, skimmed and struggled on the surface in glances of fire, like evil spirits watching to seize them as their prey. At length the screaming and shrieking of the birds, the clang of their wings, and the bellowing of the cattle ceased; and the startled fish subsided slowly down into the oozy caverns at the bottom of the sea, and becoming motionless, disappeared, and all was again black and undistinguishable, the death-like silence being only broken by the hoarse murmuring of the distant surf.

"Magnificent!" burst from the captain. "Messenger, send Mr. Portfire here." The gunpowder functionary, he of the flannel cartridge, appeared. "Gunner, send one of your mates into the maintop, and let him burn a blue light."

The lurid glare blazed up balefully amongst the spars and rigging, lighting up the decks, and blasting the crew into the likeness of the host of Sennacherib, when the day broke on them, and they were all dead corpses. Astern of us, indistinct, from the distance,

the white Moro castle re-appeared, and rose frowning, tier above tier, like a Tower of Babel, with its summit veiled in the clouds, and the startled sea-fowl wheeling above the higher batteries, like snow-flakes blown about in a storm; while, near at hand, the rocks on each side of us looked as if fresh-splintered asunder, with the sulphureous flames which had split them still burning; the trees looked no longer green, but were sicklied o'er with a pale ashy colour, as if sheeted ghosts were holding their midnight orgies amongst their branches—cranes, and waterfowl, and birds of many kinds, and all the insect and reptile tribes, their gaudy noontide colours merged into one and the same fearful death-like sameness, flitted and sailed and circled above us, and chattered and screamed and shrieked; and the unearthly-looking guanas, and numberless creeping things, ran out on the boughs to peer at us, and a large snake twined itself up a scathed stump, that shot out from a shattered pinnacle of rock that overhung us, with its glossy skin, glancing like the brazen serpent set up by Moses in the camp of the Israelites; and the cattle on the beetling summit of the cliff craned over the precipitous ledge to look down upon us, and, while every thing around us and above us was thus glancing in the blue and ghastly radiance, the band struck up a low moaning air; the light burnt out, and once more we were cast, by the contrast, into even more palpable darkness than before. I was entranced, and stood with folded arms, looking forth into the night, and musing intensely on the appalling scene which had just vanished like a feverish dream —"Dinner waits, sir," quoth Mafame.

"Oh! I am coming," and kicking all my romance

to old Nick, I descended, and we had a pleasant night of it, and some wine and some fun, and there an end—but I have often dreamed of that dark pool, and the scenes I witnessed there that day and night. Now, devil take you, old Kit North, this is not ending abruptly, is it?

"*Wheesht*," said Conshy; "go to your bed now, Tam—ye're fou, man."

"Oh! Buenos Noches."

CHAPTER XV.

THE PIRATE'S LEMAN.

"When lovely woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can sooth her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away!

The only art her guilt can cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom, is to die."

Vicar of Wakefield.

"*Ay Dios, si sera possible que he-ya hallado lugar que pueda servir de escondida sepultura a la carga peseda deste cuerpo, que tan contra mi voluntad sostengo?*"

Don Quixote de la Mancha.

The next morning after breakfast I proceeded to Santiago, and landed at the custom-house wharf, where I found every thing bustle, dust, and heat; several of the captains of the English vessels were there, who immediately made up to me, and reported how far advanced in their lading they were, and inquired when we were to give them convoy, the latest news from Kingston, &c. At length I saw our friend

Ricardo Campana going along one of the neighbouring streets, and I immediately made sail in chase. He at once recognised me, gave me a cordial shake of the hand, and inquired how he could serve me. I produced two letters which I had brought for him, but which had been forgotten in the bustle of yesterday: they were introductory, and although sealed, I had some reason to conjecture that my friend Mr. Pepperpot Wagtail had done me much more than justice. Campana, with great kindness, immediately invited me to his house. "We foreigners," said he, "don't keep your hours; I am just going home to breakfast." It was past eleven in the forenoon. I was about excusing myself on the plea of having already breakfasted, when he silenced me. "Why, I guessed as much, Mr. Lieutenant; but then you have not lunched; so you can call it lunch, you know, if it will ease your conscience." There was no saying nay to all this civility, so we stumped along the burning streets, through a mile of houses, large massive buildings, but very different in externals from the gay domiciles of Kingston. Aaron Bang, who was with me, whispered that they looked more like prisons than dwelling-houses, and he was not in this very much out. Most of them were built of brick, and plastered over, with large windows, in front of each of which, like the houses in the south of Spain, there was erected a large heavy wooden balcony, projecting far enough from the wall to allow a Spanish chair, such as I have already described, to be placed in it. The front of these verandahs was closed in with a row of heavy bullustrades at the bottom, of a variety of shapes, and by clumsy carved wood work above, which effectually prevented you from seeing

into the interior. The whole had a Moorish air, and in the upper part of the town there was a Sabbath-like stillness prevailing, which was only broken now and then by the tinkle of a guitar from one of the aforesaid verandahs, or by the rattling of a crazy *volante*, a sort of covered gig, drawn by a broken-kneed, and broken-winded mule, with a kiln-dried old Spaniard or Dona in it.

The lower part of the town had been busy enough, and the stir and hum of it rendered the quietude of the upper part of it more striking.

A shovel-hatted friar now suddenly accosted us.

"*Senor Campana—ese pobre familia de Cangrejo! Lastima! Lastima!*"

"*Cangrejo—Cangrejo!*" muttered I; "why, it is the very name attached to the miniature."

Campana turned to the priest, and they conversed earnestly together for some moments, when he left him, and we again held on our way. I could not help asking him, what family that was, whose situation the "*padre*" seemed so feelingly to bemoan.

"Never mind," said he, "never mind; they were a proud family once, but that is all over now—come along."

"But," said I, "I have a very peculiar cause of interest with regard to this family. You are aware, of course, of the trial and execution of the pirates in Kingston, the most conspicuous of whom was a young man called *Frederico Cangrejo*, from whom"——

"Mr. Cringle," said he, solemnly, "at a fitting time I will hear you regarding that matter; at present I entreat you will not press it."

Good manners would not allow me to push it farther, and we trudged along together, until we arrived at

Don Ricardo Campana's door. It was a large brick building, plastered over, as already described, and white-washed. There was a projecting stair in front, with a flight of steps to the right and left, with a parapet wall towards the street. There were two large windows, with the wooden verandah or lattice projecting into the street, on the first floor, and on the second a range of smaller windows, of the same kind. What answers to our ground floor, was level with the street, and was occupied by warehouses, filled with dry goods, sugar, coffee, hides, and a vast variety of miscellaneous articles. We ascended the stairs, and entered a lofty room, cool and dark, and paved with large diamond-shape bricks, and every way desirable for a West India lounge, all to the furniture, which was meagre enough; three or four chairs, a worm-eaten old leathern sofa, and a large clumsy hard-wood table in the midst.

There were several children playing about, little sallow devils, although, I dare say, they could all of them have been furnished with certificates of white parentage, upon whom one or two negro women were hovering in attendance beyond a large folding door, that fronted the entrance.

When we entered, the eldest of the children, a little girl of about eight years old, was sitting in the door-way, playing with a small blue toy that I could make nothing of, until on a nearer inspection I found it to be a live land-crab, which the little lady had manacled with a thread by the foot, the thread being fastened to a nail, which was driven into a seam of the floor.

As an article of food, I was already familiar with this creature, but I had never seen a living one be-

fore; it was in every respect like a sea-crab, only smaller, the body being at the widest not above three inches across the back. It fed without any apparent fear, and while it pattered over the tiled floors with its hard claws, it would seize a piece of bread in its forceps, and feed itself like a little monkey. By the time I had exchanged a few words with the little lady, the large door that opened into the hall on the right hand moved, and mine hostess made her appearance; a small woman, dressed in a black gown, very laxly fitted. She was the very converse of our old ship, she never *missed stays*, although I did cruelly.

"This is my friend, Lieutenant Cringle," said mine host.

"*A las pies de usted, Senora,*" responded your humble servant.

"I am very glad to see you," said the lady; "but breakfast is ready; welcome, sir, welcome."

The food was not amiss, the coffee decidedly good, and the chocolate, wherein, if you had planted a teaspoon, it would have stood upright, was excellent.—After we had done with substantials, *Dulce*, that is the fruit of the guava, preserved, in small wooden boxes, (like drums of figs,) and made into a kind of jam, was placed on the table, and after mine host and his spouse had eaten a bushel of it a-piece, and drank a gallon of that most heathenish beverage, cold clear water, the repast was considered ended; but after a hearty meal, and a pint of claret, I felt rather inclined to sit still and expatiate for an hour or so, when Campana roused me, and asked whether or not I felt inclined to go and look at the town. I had no apology, and although I would much rather have sat still, I rose to accompany him, when in walked Cap-

tain N——. He was also kindly received by Don Ricardo.

"Glad of the honour of this visit," said he in French, with a slight *lift* of the corner of his mouth; "I hope neither *you* nor your boat's crew took any harm after the *heat* of yesterday."

N—— laughed.

"Why, you did beat us very neatly, Don Ricardo. Pray, where got you that canoe? But a lady—Mrs. Campana, I presume?—Have the goodness to introduce me."

The skipper was presented in due form, the lady receiving him without the least *mauvaise honte*, which, after all, I believe to be indigenous to our island.—Aaron was next introduced, who, as he spoke no lingo, *as I knows of*, to borrow Timotheus Tailtackle's phraseology, but English, was rather posed in the interview.

"I say, Tom, tell her I wish she may live a thousand years. Ah, so, that will do."

Madama made her *conge*, and hoped "*El Senor, tomaria una sciento.*"

"*Mucho, mucho,*" sung out Bang, who meant by that he was *much* obliged.

At length, Don Ricardo came to our aid. He had arranged a party into the country in the morning, and invited us all to come back to a *tertulia* in the evening, and to take beds in his house, he undertaking to provide *bestias* to carry us.

We, therefore, strolled out, a good deal puzzled what to make of ourselves until the evening, when we fell in with one of the captains of the English ships then loading, who told us that there was a sort of hotel a little way down the street, where we might

dine at two o'clock at the *table d'hôte*. It was as yet only twelve, so we stumbled into this said hotel to reconnoitre, and a sorry affair it was. The public room was fitted with rough wooden tables, at which Spaniards, Americans, and Englishmen, sat and smoked, and drank sangaree, hot punch, or cold grog, as best suited them, and committed a vast variety of miscellaneous abominations during their potations.—We were about giving up all thoughts of the place, and had turned to go to the door, when in popped our friend Don Ricardo. He saw we were somewhat abroad.

"Gentlemen," said he, "if I may ask, have you any engagement to dinner?"

"No, we have none."

"Well then, will you do me the honour of partaking of my family fare, at three o'clock? I did not venture to invite you before, because I knew you had other letters to deliver, and I wished to leave you masters of your own time." We gladly accepted his kind offer; he had made his bow, and was cruising amongst the smokers, and punch-drinkers, where the blue-coated masters of the English merchantmen, and American skippers, were hobbing and nobbing with the gingham-coated Dons, for the whole Spanish part of the community were figged out in Glasgow and Paisley ginghams; when the priest, who had attracted our attention in the morning, came up to him, and drew him aside. They talked earnestly together, the *clerico*, every now and then, indicating by significant nods and glances towards us, that we formed the burden of his song, whatever that might be. Campana seemed exceedingly unwilling to communicate the message, which we guessed he had been entreated

to carry to us, and made one or two attempts to shove the friar in *propria persona* towards us, that he might himself tell his own story. At length they advanced together to where we stood, when he addressed me.

"You must pardon me, lieutenant; but as the proverb hath it, 'strange countries, strange manners;' my friend here, *Padre Carera*, brings a message from *El Senor Picador Cangrejo*, one of our magnates, that he will consider it an especial favour if you will call on him, either this forenoon or to-morrow."

"Why, *who is* this Cangrejo, Don Ricardo? if he be not the father of the poor fellow I mentioned, there must be some mystery about him."

"No mystery," chimed in the monk; "no mystery whatever, but *mucho, mucho, miseria hijo mio;* much misery, sir, and more impending, and none to help save only"—— He did not finish the sentence, but taking off his shovel-hat, and showing his finely turned bald head, he looked up to heaven, and crossed himself, the tears trickling down his wrinkled cheeks. "But," continued he, "you will come, Mr. Cringle?"

"Certainly," said I, "to-morrow I will call, if my friend Don Ricardo will be my guide." This being fixed, we strolled about until dinner time, friend Aaron making his remarks regarding the people and their domiciles with great *naivete.*

"Strange now, Tom, I had expected to see little else amongst the slave population here than misery and starvation; whereas, so far as I can observe, they are all deucedly well cared for, and fat, and contented; and from the inquiries I was making amongst the captains of the merchantmen"——("*Masters,*"

interjected Captain N——, "*Master* of a merchantman, *Captain* of a man-of-war.") "Well, captains of merchantmen,—masters, I mean,—I find that the people whom they employ are generally free; and, farther, that the slaves are not more than three to one, to one free person, yet they export a great deal of produce, Captain N—— must keep my eyes about me." And so he did, as will be seen by and by. But the dinner hour drew near, and we repaired to Don Ricardo's, where we found a party of eight assembled, and our appearance was the signal for the repast being ordered in. It was laid out in the entrance hall. The table was of massive mahogany, the chairs of the same material, with stuffed bottoms, covered with a dingy coloured morocco, which might have been red *once*. But devil a dish of any kind was on the snow-white table cloth when we sat down; and our situations, or the places we were expected to fill at the board, were only indicated by a large knife and silver fork and spoon laid down for each person. The company consisted of Don Ricardo *Campana*, *Le Senora Campana*, and a brother of his, two dark young men, his clerks, and three young women, ladies, or *senoras*, as I ought to have called them, who were sitting so far back into the shade, at the dark end of the room, when we entered, that I could not tell what they were. Our hostess was, although a little woman, a good-looking dark Spaniard, as already mentioned, not very polished, but very kind; and seeing that our friend Aaron was the most helpless amongst us, she took him under her especial care, and made many a civil speech to him, although her husband did not fail to advertise her, that he understood not one word of Spanish, that is, of all she was

saying to him. However, he replied to her kindnesses by his never-failing exclamation of "*mucho, mucho,*" and they appeared to be getting on extremely well. "Bring dinner," quoth Don Ricardo, "*trae la Comida;*" and four black female domestics entered, the first with a large dish of pillaffe, or fowls smothered in rice and onions; the second with a nondescript melange, flesh, fish, and fowl apparently, strongly flavoured with garlic; the third bore a dish of jerked beef, cut into long shreds, and swimming in *seba* or lard; and the fourth bore a large dish full of that indescribable thing known by those who have read Don Quixote, as an *olla podrida.* The sable handmaidens began to circulate round the table, and every one helped himself to the dish that he most fancied. At length they placed them on the board, and brought massive silver salvers, with snow-white bread, twisted into strands in the baking, like junks of a cable; and water jars, and yams nicely roasted and wrapped in plantain leaves. These were in like manner handed round, and then deposited on the table, and the domestics vanished.

We all got on cheerily enough, and both the captain and myself were finishing off with the *olla podrida,* with which, it so happened, we were familiar, and friend Bang taking the time from us, took heart of grace and straightway followed our example. There was a pause—rather an irksome one from its continuance, so much so indeed, that knocking off from my more immediate business of gorging the aforesaid *olla podrida,* I looked up, and as it so happened, by accident towards our friend Bang—and there he was, munching and screwing up his energies to swallow a large mouthful of the mixture, against which his sto-

mach appeared to rebel. "Smollet's feast after the manner of the ancients," whispered N———. At length he made a vigorous effort and straightway sung out—"*L'eau de vie*, Don Ricardibus—some brandy, *mon ami*—for the love of all the respectable saints in your heathenish calendar."

Mine host laughed, but the females were most confoundedly posed. The younger ones ran for aromatic salts, while the lady of the house fetched some very peculiar distilled waters. She, in her kindness, filled a glass and helped Bang, but the instant he perceived the flavour, he thrust it away.

"Anniseed—damn anniseed—no, no—obliged—*mucho, mucho*—but brandy *plaino*, that is simple of itself, if you please—that's it, my dear madam—may you live a thousand years, though."

The pure brandy was administered, and once more the dark beauties reappeared, the first carrying a bottle of vindegrave, the second one of vinotinto, or claret, and the third one of *l'eau de vie*, for Aaron's peculiar use. These were placed before the landlord, who helped himself to half a pint of claret, which he poured into a large tumbler, and then putting a drop or two of water into it, tasted it, and sent it to his wife. In like manner, he gave a smaller quantity to each of the other senoras, when the whole female part of the family drank our healths in a volley. But all this time the devil a thing drinkable was there before we males, but goblets of pure cold water. Bang's "*mucho, mucho*" even failed him, for he had only in his modesty got a thimbleful of brandy to qualify the *olla podrida*. But, in a twinkling, a beautiful long-necked bottle of claret was planted at each of our right hands, and of course we lost no time in return-

ing the unlooked for civility of the ladies. Until this moment I had not got a proper glimpse of the three virgins of the Sun, who were seated at table with us. They were very pretty Moorish-looking girls, as like as peas; dark hair, black eyes, clear, colourless olive complexion, and no stays; but young and elastic as their figures were, this was no disadvantage. They were all three dressed in black silk petticoats, over a sort of cambric chemise, with large frills hanging down at the bosom, but gown, properly so called, they had none, their arms being unencumbered with any clothing heavier than a shoulder-strap. The eldest was a fine full young woman of about nineteen; the second was more tall and stately, but slighter; and the youngest, was—oh, she was an angel of light —such hair, such eyes, and such a mouth; then her neck and bosom—"Oh, my Norah's gown for me, to rise and fall as nature pleases," when the wearer *is*, as in the present case she *was*, young and beautiful. They all wore a long plain white gauze strap, like a broad riband, (little Reefpoint said they all wore boat pennants at their mast-heads,) I don't know what Madam Maradongarcon would call it, in their hair, which fell down from amongst the braids nearly to their heels, and then they replied in their magnificent language, when casually addressed during dinner, with so much *naivete*. We, the males of the party, had drank little or nothing, a bottle of claret or so apiece, and a dram of brandy, to qualify a little vindegrave that we had flirted with during dinner; when our landlord rose, wished us a good afternoon, and departed to his counting-house, saying he would be back by dark, leaving the captain and I, and friend Bang, to amuse the ladies the best way we could, as

the clerks had taken wing along with their master. Don Ricardo's departure seemed to be the signal for all hands breaking loose, and a regular romping match took place, the girls producing their guitars, and we were all mighty frolicsome and happy, when a couple of *padres* from the convent of La Merced, in their white flannel gowns, black girdles, and shaven crowns, suddenly entered the hall. We, the foreign part of the society, calculated on being pulled up by the *clericos*, but deuce a bit; on the contrary, the young females clustered round them, laughing and joking, while the *Senora Campana* presented them with goblets of claret, in which they drank our healths, once and again, and before long they were gamboling about, all shaven and shorn, like a couple of three-year olds. Bang had a large share of their assiduity, and to see him waltzing with a fine active, and what I fancy to be a rarity, a clean-looking priest, with his ever recurring "*mucho, mucho,*" was rather entertaining.

The director of the post-office, and a man who was called the "*Corregidor de Tobaco,*" literally the "corrector of tobacco," dropped in about this time, and one or two ladies, relatives of Mrs. Campana, and Don Ricardo, returning soon after, we had sweetmeats, and liqueurs, and coffee, and chocolate, and a game at monte, and maco, and were, in fact, very happy. But the happiest day, as well as the most miserable, must have an end, and the merry party dropped off, one after another, until we were left all alone with our host's family. *Madama* soon after took her departure, wishing us a good night. She had no sooner gone, than Bang began to shoot out his horns a bit. "I say, Tom, ask the Don to let us have

a drop of something hot, will you, a tumbler of hot brandy and water, after the waltzing, eh? I don't see the bedroom candles yet." Nor would he, if we had sat there till doomsday. Campana seemed to have understood Bang, the brandy was immediately forthcoming, and we drew in to the table to enjoy ourselves, Bang waxing talkative. "Now, what odd names,—why, what a strange office it must be for his Majesty of Spain to employ at every port a *corrector of tobacco;* that his liege subjects may not be imposed on, I suppose—what capital cigars this same *corrector* must have, eh!"

I suppose it is scarcely necessary to mention, that throughout all the Spanish American possessions, tobacco is a royal monopoly, and that the officer above alluded to is the functionary who has the management of it. Don Ricardo, hearing something about cigars, took the hint, and immediately produced a straw case from his pocket, and handed it to Bang.

"*Mucho, mucho,*" quoth Bang; "capital, real Havannah."

So now, since we had gotten all fairly into the clouds, there was no saying how long we should have remained in the seventh heaven—much would have depended upon the continuance of the supply of brandy—but two female slaves presently made their appearance, each carrying a *quatre.* I believe I have already described this easily riggid couch somewhere; it is a hardwood-frame, like what supports the loose top of a laundry table, with canvass stretched over the top of it, but in such a manner that it can be folded up flat, and laid against the wall when not in use, while a bed could be immediately constructed by simply opening it and stretching the canvass. The

handmaidens accordingly set to work to arrange two beds or *quatres*, one on each side of the table where we were sitting, while Bang sat eyeing them askance, in a kind of wonderment as to the object of the preparations, which were by no means new either to the Captain or me, who, looking on them as matters of course, continued in close confabulation with Don Ricardo during the operations.

"I say, Tom," at length quoth Bang, "are you to be laid out on one of these outlandish pieces of machinery—eh?"

"Why, I suppose so; and comfortable enough beds they are, I can assure you."

"Don't fancy them much, however," said Bang; "rather flimsy the frame work."

The servants now, very unceremoniously, no leave asked, began to clear away all the glasses and tumblers on the table.

"Hillo," said the skipper, casting an inquiring glance at Campana, who however did not return it, but, as a matter of course apparently, rose; and taking a chair to the other end of the room, close by the door of an apartment which opened from it, began in cold blood to unlace, and disburden himself of all his apparel, even unto his shirt.

This surprised us all a good deal, but our wonderment was lost on the Don, who got up from his seat, and in his linen garment, which was deucidly laconic, made his formal bow, wished us good-night, and presenting the reverse of his medal, which was extremely picturesque, he vanished through the door. By this, the ebony ladies had cleared the table of the crystal, and had capped it with a yellow leathern mattress, with pillows of the same, both embossed with

large tufts of red silk; on this they placed *one* sheet, and leaving a silver apparatus at the head, they disappeared—"*Buenos noches, Senors—las camas estan listas.*"

Bang had been unable to speak from excess of astonishment; but the skipper and I finding there was no help for it, had followed Campana's example, and kept pace with him in our *peeling* so that by the time he disappeared, we were ready to topple into our *quatres*, which we accordingly did, and by this time we were both at full length, with our heads cased each in one of Don Ricardo's silk night-caps, contemplating Bang's appearance, as he sat in disconsolate mood in his chair at the head of the table, with the fag-end of a cigar in the corner of his cheek.

"Now, Bang," said N——e—, "turn in, and let us have a snooze, will ye?"

Bang did not seem to like it much.

"Zounds, N———, did you ever hear of a gentleman being put to bed on a table? Why, it must be a quiz. Only fancy me dished out, like a great calipee in the shell! However, here goes—But surely this is in sorry taste; we had our chocolate a couple of hours ago—capital it was by the by—in vulgar Staffordshire china, and now they give us silver"———

"Be decent, Bang," cut in the skipper, who was by this time more than half asleep. "Be decent, and go to bed—that's a good fellow."

"Ah, well"—Aaron undressed himself, and lay down, and there he was laid out, with a candle on each side of his head, his red face surmounted by a redder handkerchief tied round his head, sticking out above the white sheet; and supported by Captain

N——— and myself, one on each side. All was now quiet. I got up and put out the candles, and as I fell asleep, I could hear Aaron laughing to himself—"dished, and served up, deuced like Saint Barts. I was intended for a doctor, Tom, you must know. I hope the Don is not a medical amateur; I trust he won't have a touch at me before morning. Rum *subject* I should make. Possibly he may want to practise cutting for the stone—he! he!" All was silent for some time.

"Hillo—what is that?" said Aaron again, as if suddenly aroused from his slumbers,—"I say, none of your fun, N———."

A large bat was *flaffing* about, and I could hear him occasionally *whiz* near our faces.

"Oh, a bat—hate bats—How the skipper snores! I hope there be no resurrection men in St. Jago, or I shall be stolen away to a certainty before morning. How should I look as a skeleton in a glass-case, eh?"

I heard no more, until, it might be, about midnight, when I was awakened, and frightened out of my wits, by Bang rolling *off* the table *on* to my *quatre*, which he broke in his fall, and then we both rolled over and over on the floor.

"Murder!" roared Bang. "I am bewitched and bedevilled. Murder! a scorpion has dropped from the roof into my mouth, and stung me on the nose. Murder! Tom—Tom Cringle—Captain—N——, my dear fellows, awake and send for the doctor. Oh, my wig—oh dear!—oh dear!"—

At this uproar I could hear Don Ricardo striking a light, and presently he appeared with a candle in his hand, more than half naked, with *La Senora* peering through the half-opened door behind him.

"*Ave Maria purissima*—what is the matter? Where is *el Senor Bang?*"

"*Mucho, mucho,*" shouted Bang from below the table. "Send for a doctoribus, Senor Richardum. I am dead and t'other thing—help!—help!"

"*Dios guarda Usted,*" again ejaculated Campana. "*What has* befallen him?" addressing the skipper, who was by this time on his head's antipodes in bed, rubbing his eyes, and in great amazement.

"Tell him, my dear N——, that a scorpion fell from the roof, and stung me on the nose."

"What says he?" inquired the Spaniard.

Poor N——'s intellect was at this time none of the clearest, being more than half asleep, and not quite so sober as a hermit is wont to be; besides, he must needs speak Spanish, of which he was by no means master, which led to a very comical blunder. *Alacran*, in Spanish, means scorpion; and *Cayman*, an alligator, not very similar in sound certainly, but the *termination* being the same, he selected in the hurry the wrong phrase.

"He says," replied N——, in bad Spanish, "that he has swallowed an alligator, or something of that sort, sir." Then a loud yawn.

"Swallowed a what?" rejoined Campana, greatly astonished.

"No, no," snorted the captain—"I am wrong—he says he has been *stung* by an alligator."

"Stung by an alligator!—impossible."

"Why, then," persisted the skipper, "if he be not stung by an alligator, or if he has not *really* swallowed one, at all events an alligator has either stung or swallowed him—so make the most of it, Don Ricardo."

"Why, this is absurd, with all submission," continued Campana; "how the deuce could he swallow an alligator, or an alligator get into my house to annoy him?"

"D—n it," said N——, half tipsy and very sleepy, "that's his look out. You are very unreasonable, Don Ricardo; all that is the affair of friend Bang and the alligator; my purpose is solely to convey his meaning *faithfully*"—a loud snore.

"Oh," said Campana, laughing, "I see, I see; I left your friend *sobre mesa*, (on the table,) but now I see he is *sub rosa*."

"Help, good people, help!" roared Bang—"help, or my nose will reach from this to the Moro castle—Help!"

We got him out, and, were I to live a thousand years, which would be a tolerably good spell; I don't think I could forget his appearance. His nose, usually the smallest article of the kind that I ever saw, was now swollen as large as my fist, and as purple as a mulberry—the distention of the skin, from the venomous sting of the reptile—for stung he *had been* by a scorpion—made it semi-transparent, so that it looked like a large *blob* of currant jelly hung on a peg in the middle of his face, or a gigantic leech, gorged with blood, giving his visage the semblance of some grotesque, old-fashioned dial, with a fantastic gnomon.

"A poultice—a poultice—a poultice, good people, or I shall presently be all nose together,"—and a poultice was promptly manufactured from mashed pumpkin, and he was put to bed, with his face covered up with it, as if an Italian artist had been taking a cast of his beauties in plaster of Paris.

In the application of this said poultice, however, we had nearly extinguished poor Aaron amongst us, by suffocating him outright; for the skipper, who was the operating surgeon in the first instance, with me for his mate, clapped a whole ladle full over his mouth and nose, which, besides being scalding hot, sealed those orifices effectually, and, indeed, about a couple of table spoonfulls had actually been forced down his gullet, notwithstanding his struggles, and exclamations of "Pumpkin—bad—softened with castor oil—d—n it, skipper, you'll choke me"—spurt—sputter—sputter—"choke me, man."

"Cuidado," said Don Ricardo; "let me manage" —and he got a small tube of wild cane, which he stuck into Bang's mouth, through a hole in the poultice-cloth, and set a negro servant to watch that it did not sink into his gullet, as he fell asleep, and with instructions to take the poultice off whenever the pain abated; and there he lay on his back, whistling through this artificial beak, like a sick snipe.

At length, however, all hands of us seemed to have fallen asleep, but, towards the dawning, I was awakened by repeated bursts of suppressed laughter, and upon looking in the direction from whence the sounds proceeded, I was surprised beyond all measure to observe N—— in a corner of the room in his trousers and shirt, squatted, like a tailor, on his hams, with one of the sable damsels on her knees beside him holding a candle, while his majesty's post captain was plying his needle in a style, and with a dexterity, that would have charmed our friend Stultze exceedingly, and every now and then bending double over his work, and swinging his body backwards and forwards, with the water welling from his eyes,

laughing all the while like to choke himself. As for his bronze candlestick, I thought she would have expired on the spot, with her white teeth glancing like ivory, and the tears running down her cheeks, as she every now and then clapped a handkerchief on her mouth to smother the uncontrollable uproariousness of her mirth.

"Why, captain, what spree is this?" said I.

"Never you mind, but come here. I say, Mr. Cringle, do you see him piping away there?"—and there he was, sure enough, still gurgling through the wild cane—with his black guardian, whose province it was to have removed the poultice, sound asleep, snoring in the huge chair at Bang's head, wherein he had established himself, while the candle at his patient's cheek was flickering in the socket.

My superior was evidently bent on wickedness.

"Get up and put on your trousers, man."

I did so.

"Now wait a bit till I cooper him—Here, my darling"—to the sable virgin, who was now on the *qui vive*, bustling about—"here," said the captain, putting out a leg of Bang's trousers, "hold you there, my dear"——

She happened to be a native of Haiti, and comprehended his French.

—"Now hold *you* that, Mr. Cringle."

I took hold of the other leg, and held it in a fitting position, while N—— deliberately sewed them both up.

"Now for the coat sleeves"—

We sealed them in a similar manner.

"So—now for his shirt."

We sewed up the stem, and then the stern, con-

verting it into an outlandish-looking pillow-case, and finally, both sleeves; and last of all, we got two live land-crabs from the servants, by dint of persuasion and a little *plata*, and clapped one into each stocking foot.

We then dressed ourselves, and when all was ready, we got a piece of tape for a landyard, and made one end fast to the handle of a large earthen water-jar, full to the brim, which we placed on Bang's pillow, and passed the other end round the neck of the sleeping negro.

"Now, get you to bed," said the captain to the dingy hand-maiden, "and stand by to be off, Mr. Cringle."

He stepped to Don Ricardo's bed-room door, and tapped loudly.

"Hillo!" quoth the Don. On this hint, like men, springing a mine, the last who leave the sap, we sprang into the street, when the skipper turned, and taking aim with a large custard apple, which he had armed himself with, (I have formerly described this fruit as resembling a russet bag of cold pudding,) he let fly. Spin flew the apple—bash on the blackamoor's obtuse snout. He started back, and, in his terror and astonishment, threw a *somersault* over the back of his chair—gush poured the water—smash fell the pipkin—"murder" roared Bang, dashing off the poultice cast with such fury that it lighted in the street—and away we raced at the top of our speed.

We ran as fast as our legs would carry us for two hundred yards, and, then turning, walked deliberately home again, as if we had been out taking a walk in the cool morning air.

As we approached, we heard the yells of a negro, and Bang high in oath.

"You black rascal, nothing must serve your turn but practising your John Canoe tricks upon a gentleman—take that, you villain, as a small recompense for floating me out of my bed—or rather, off the table," and the ludicrousness of his couch seemed to come over the worthy fellow once more, and he laughed loud and long—"Poor devil, I hope I have not hurt you? here, Quashi, there's a pistole, go buy a plaster for your broken pate."

By this we had returned in front of the house, and as we ascended the front stairs, we again heard a loud racketing within; but blackie's voice was now wanting in the row, wherein the Spaniard and our friend appeared to be the *dramatis personæ*—and sure enough there was Don Ricardo and Bang, at it, tooth and nail.

"Allow me to assist you," quoth the Don.

"Oh no—*mucho—mucho*," quoth Bang, who was spinning round and round in his shirt on one leg, trying to thrust his foot into his trousers; but the garment was impervious; and after emulating Noblet in a pirouette, he sat down in despair. We appeared—"Ah, N———, glad to see you—some evil spirit has bewitched me, I believe—over night I was stung to death by a scorpion—half an hour ago I was deluged by an invisible spirit—and just now when I got up, and began to pull on my stockings, why, a land-crab was in the toe part, and see how he has scarified me"—forking up his peg—"I then tried my trousers," he continued in a most doleful tone —"and lo! the legs are sealed. And look at my face, saw you ever such an unfortunate? When

shall we return to Kingston, eh? I can't stand this work long, I assure you."

The truth is that our amigo Aaron had gotten an awful fright on his first awakening after his cold bath, for he had given the poor black fellow an ugly blow upon the face, before he had gathered his senses well about him, and the next moment seeing the blood streaming from his nose, and mixing with the custard-like pulp of the fruit with which his face was plastered, he took it into his noddle that he had knocked the man's brains out. However, we righted the worthy fellow the best way we could, and shortly afterwards coffee was brought, and Bang having got himself shaven and dressed, began to forget all his botherations. But before we left the house, *Madama*, Don Ricardo's better-half, insisted on anointing his nose with some mixture famous for reptile-bites; his natural good-breeding made him submit to the application, which was neither more nor less than an infusion of indigo and ginger, with which the worthy lady painted our friend's face and muzzle in a most ludicrous manner—it was *heads* and *tails* between him and an ancient Briton. Reefpoint at this moment appeared at the door with a letter from the merchant captains, which had been sent down to the corvette, regarding the time of sailing, and acquainting us when they would be ready. While Captain N—— was perusing it, Bang was practising Spanish at the expense of Don Ricardo, whom he had boxed in a corner; but all his Spanish seemed to be scraps of schoolboy Latin, and I noticed that Campana had the greatest difficulty in keeping his countenance. At length, Don Ricardo approached us—"Gentlemen, I have laid out a little plan for the day; it is my wife's

saint's-day, and a holiday in the family, so we propose going to a coffee property of mine, about ten miles from Santiago, and staying till morning—What say you?"

I chimed in—"I fear, sir, that I shall be unable to accompany you, even if Captain N—— should be good enough to give me leave, as I have an errand to do for that unhappy young fellow that we spoke about last evening—some trinkets which I promised to deliver; here they are"—and I produced the miniature and crucifix.

Campana winced—"Unpleasant, certainly, Lieutenant"——said he. "I know it will be so myself, but I have *promised*"——

"Then far be it from me to induce you to break your promise," said the worthy man. "My son," said he, gravely, "you must have noticed a friar draw me aside more than once yesterday—he is confessor to *Don Picador Cangrejo's* family, and his object was to obtain an interview with you, for it is known that you were active in capturiug the unfortunate men with whom young *Federico Cangrejo*, his only son, was leagued. Oh, that poor boy! Had you known him, gentlemen, as I knew him, poor, poor Federico!"

"He was an awful villain, however, you must allow," said the captain.

"Granted in the fullest sense, my dear sir," enjoined Campana; "but we are all frail, erring creatures, and he was hardly dealt by. He is now gone to his heavy, heavy account, and I may as well tell you the poor boy's sad story at once. Had you but seen him in his prattling infancy, in his sunny boyhood! He was the only son of a rich old father, an

honest but worldly man, and of a most peevish, irascible temper. Poor Federico, and his sister Francisca, his only sister, were often cruelly used; and his orphan cousin, my sweet god-daughter, Maria Olivera, their playmate, was, if any thing, more harshly treated; for although his mother was and is a most excellent woman, and always stood between them and the old man's ill temper, yet at the time I speak of she had returned to Spain, where a long period of ill health detained her for upwards of three years.—Federico by this time was nineteen years of age, tall, handsome, and accomplished, beyond all the youth of his rank and time of life in Cuba: But you have seen him, gentlemen, in his extremity, it is true; yet, fallen as he was, I mistake if you thought him a *common* man. For good, or for evil, my heart told me he would be conspicuous, and I was, alas the day! too true a prophet. His attachment to his cousin, who, on the death of her mother, had become an inmate of *Don Picador's* house, had been evident to all but the purblind old man for a long time; and when he did discover it, he imperatively forbade all intercourse between them, as forsooth, he had projected a richer match for him, and shut Maria up in a corner of his large mansion. Federico, haughty and proud, could not stomach this. He ceased to reside at his father's estate, which had been confided to his management, and began to frequent the billiard-table, and *monte*-tables, and taverns, and in a thousand ways gave, from less to more, such unendurable offence, that his father at length shut his door against him, and turned him, with twenty doubloons in his pocket, into the street.

"Friends interceded, for the feud soon became

public, and, amongst others, I essayed to heal it; and with the fond, although passionate father, I easily succeeded; but how true it is, 'that evil communication corrupts good manners!' I found Federico, by this time, linked in bands of steel with a *junto* of desperadoes, whose calling was any thing but equivocal; and implacable to a degree, that, knowing him as I had known him, I had believed impossible. But, alas, the human heart is, indeed, desperately wicked. I struggled long with the excellent Father *Carera* to bring about a reconciliation, and thought we had succeeded, as Federico was induced to return to his father's house once more, and for many days and weeks we all flattered ourselves that he had reformed; until one morning, about four months ago, he was discovered coming out of his cousin's room about the dawning by his father, who immediately charged him with seducing his ward. High words ensued. Poor Maria rushed out and threw herself at her uncle's feet. The old man, in a transport of fury, kicked her on the face as she lay prostrate; whereupon, he was in a moment felled to the earth by his own flesh, and bone, and blood—by his abandoned son. The rest is soon told;—he joined the pirate vessels at Puerto Escondido, and, from his daring and reckless intrepidity, soon rose to command amongst them, and was proceeding in his infernal career, when the God whom he had so fearfully defied at length sent him to expiate his crimes on the scaffold."

"But the priest," said I, much excited—"he who has twice fastened on you, what does he want with me?"

"True," continued Don Ricardo, "he is the very Padre *Carera* of whom I spoke, and brought a joint mes-

sage from his poor mother, and sister, and—and, oh, my darling god-child, my heart-dear Maria"——— And the kind old man wept bitterly. I was much moved.

"Why, Mr. Cringle," said N———, "if you *have* promised to deliver the trinkets in *propria persona*, there's an end, *take* leave—nothing doing down yonder—send Tailtackle for clothes. Mr. Reefpoint, go to the boat and send up Tailtackle; so go you must to these unfortunates, and we shall then start on our cruise to the Coffee Estate with our worthy host."

"Why," said Campana, "the family are in the country; they live about four miles from Santiago, on the very road to my property, and we shall call on our way; but I don't much admire these interviews—there will be a *scene*, I fear"———

"Not on my part," said I; "but *call* I must, for I solemnly promised"—and presented the miniature to Don Ricardo.

Campana looked at it. It was exquisitely finished, and represented a most beautiful girl, a dark, large-eyed, sparkling, Spanish beauty.—"Oh, my dear, dear child," murmured Don Ricardo, "how like this *was* to what you *were:* how changed you are *now* from what it *is*—alas! alas! But come, gentlemen, my wife is ready, and my two nieces,"—the pretty girls who were of our party the previous evening—and here are the horses."

At this moment the little midshipman, Master Reefpoint, a great favourite of mine, by the by, reappeared, with Tailtackle behind him, carrying my bundle. I was regularly caught, as the clothes, on the *chance* of a lark, had been brought from the ship,

although stowed out of sight under the stern sheets of the boat.

"Here are your clothes, Mr. Cringle," quoth *middy*.

"Devil confound your civility," internally murmured I.

The captain twigged, and smiled. Upon which little Reefy stole up to me, saying, "Mr. Cringle, could you but get *me* leave to go, it would be such a"——

"Hold your tongue, boy, how can I"——

N—— struck in—"Master Reefpoint, I see what you are driving at; but how shall the Firebrand be taken care of when *you* are away, eh? besides, *you* have no clothes, and we shall be away a couple of days, most probably."

"Oh, yes, sir, I have clothes; I have a hair-brush, and a tooth-brush, and two shirt-collars, in my waistcoat pocket."

"Very well, can we venture to lumber our kind friends with this giant, Mr. Cringle, and can we really leave the ship without him?" Little Reefy was now all alive. "Tailtackle, go on board—say we shall be back to dinner the day after to-morrow," said the captain.

We now made ready for the start, and certainly the cavalcade was rather a remarkable one. First, there was an old lumbering family *volante*, a sort of gig, with four posts or uprights supporting a canopy covered with leather, and with a high dash-iron or splash-board in front. There were curtains depending from this canopy, which on occasion could be let down, so as to cover in the sides and front. The whole was of the most clumsy workmanship that can

be imagined, hung by untanned leather straps in a square wooden frame, from the front of which again protruded two shafts, straight as Corinthian pillars, and equally substantial, embracing an uncommon fine mule, one of the largest and handsomest of the species which I had seen. The harnessing partook of the same kind of unwieldy strength and solidity, and was richly embossed with silver and dirt. Astride on this *mulo* sat a household negro, with a huge thong of bullock's hide in one hand, and the reins in the other. In this *voiture* were ensconced *La Senora Campana*, a portly concern, as already mentioned, her two bright black-eyed laughing nieces, and Master Reefpoint, invisible, as he lay smothered amongst the ladies, all to his little glazed cocked hat, who was jabbering away in a most unintelligible fashion, so far as the young ladies, and eke the old one, were concerned. However, they appeared all mightily tickled by little Reefy, either mentally or physically, for off they trundled, laughing and *snirling* loud above the noise and creaking of the *volante*. Then came three small, ambling, stoutish, long-tailed ponies, the biggest not above fourteen hands high; these were the barbs intended for mine host, the skipper, and myself, caparisoned with high demipique old-fashioned Spanish saddles, mounted with silver stirrups, and clumsy bridles, with a ton of rusty iron in each poor brute's mouth for a bit, and curbs like a piece of our chain-cable, all very rich, and, as before mentioned, with regard to the *volante*, far from clean. Their pace was a fast run, a compound of walk, trot, and canter, or rather of a trot and a canter, the latter broken down, and frittered away through the instrumentality of a ferocious Mameluke bit, but as easy as

an arm-chair; and this was, I speak it feelingly, a great convenience, as a sailor is not a centaur, not altogether of a piece with his horse, as it were; yet both Captain N—— and myself were rather goodish horsemen for nauticals, although rather apt to go over the bows upon broaching too suddenly. Don Ricardo's costume would have been thought a little out of the way in Leicestershire; most people put on their boots "when they do a riding go," but he chose to mount in shoes and white cotton stockings, and white jean small-clothes, with a flowing yellow-striped gingham coat, the skirts of which fluttered in the breeze behind him, his withered face shaded by a huge Panama hat, and with enormous silver spurs on his heels, with rowels two inches in diameter.

Away lumbered the *volante*, and away we pranced after it. For the first two miles the scenery was tame enough; but after that, the two gently swelling eminences on each side of the road rose abruptly into rugged mountains; and the dell between them, which had hitherto been verdant with waving guinea grass, became covered with large trees, under the dark shade of which we lost sight of the sun, and the contrast made every thing around us for a time undistinguishable. The high-road continued for two miles farther, only broken by a small cleared patch now and then, where the sharp spiked limestone rocks shot up like minarets, and the trunks of the felled trees stood out amongst the rotton earth in the crevices, from which, however, sprung yams and cocoas, and peas of all kinds, and granadillos, and a profusion of herbs and roots, with the greatest luxuriance.

At length we came suddenly upon a cleared space; a most beautiful spot of ground, where, in the centre

of a green plot of velvet grass, intersected with numberless small walks, gravelled from a neighbouring rivulet, stood a large one-story wooden building, built in the form of a square, with a court-yard in the centre. From the moistness of the atmosphere, the outside of the weather-boarding had a green damp appearance, and so far as the house itself was concerned, there was an appearance of great discomfort. A large open balcony ran round the whole house on the outside; and fronting us there was a clumsy wooden porch supported on pillars, with the open door yawning behind it.

The hills on both sides were cleared, and planted with most luxuriant coffee-bushes, and provision grounds, while the house was shaded by several splendid star-apple and kennip trees, and there was a border of rich flowering shrubs surrounding it on all sides. The hand of woman had been there!

A few half-naked negroes were lounging about, and on hearing our approach they immediately came up, and stared wildly at us. "All fresh from the ship, these," quoth Bang.—"Can't be," said N——, "Try and see." I spoke some of the commonest Spanish expressions to them, but they neither understood them, nor could they answer me. Large flocks of cattle were grazing on the skirts of the wood, and about one hundred mules were scrambling and picking their food in a rocky river-course which bisected the valley.

The hills, tree-covered, rose round this solitary residence in all directions, as if it had been situated in the bottom of a punch-bowl; while a small water-fall, about thirty feet high, fell so near one of the corners of the building, that, when the wind set that way, as

I afterwards found, the spray moistened my hair through the open window in my sleeping apartment. We proceeded to the door, and dismounted, following the example of our host, and proceeded to help the gentlewoman to alight from the *volante*. When we were all accounted for in the porch, Don Ricardo began to shout, "*Criados, Criados, ven aca—Pendejos, ven aca!*" The call was for some time unattended to; at length two tall, good-looking, decently-dressed negroes made their appearance, and took charge of our *bestias* and carriage; but all this time there was no appearance of any living creature belonging to the family.

The dark hall into which the porch opened was paved with the usual diamond-shaped bricks or tiles, and was not ceiled, the rafters of the roof being exposed; there was little or no furniture in it, that we could see, except a clumsy table in the centre of the room, and one or two of the leathern-backed reclining chairs, such as Whiffle used to patronise. Several doors opened from this comfortless saloon, which was innocent of paint, into other apartments, one of which was ajar.

"*Estrano*," murmured Don Ricardo, "*mui estrano!*"

"Coolish reception this, Tom," quoth Aaron Bang.

"Deucedly so," said the skipper. But Campana, hooking his little fat wife under his arm, while we did the agreeable to the nieces, now addressed himself to enter, with the constant preliminary ejaculation of all well-bred Spaniards in crossing a friend's threshold, "*Ave Maria purisima*," when we were checked by a loud tearing fit of coughing, which seemed al-

most to suffocate the patient, and female voices were now heard from the room beyond, in great alarm.

Opening into the hall, presently a little anatomy of a man presented himself at the door of the apartment, wringing his hands, and apparently in great misery. Campana and his wife, with all the alacrity of kind-hearted people, immediately went up to him; and said something to him, which I did not overhear, but the poor creature to whom they spoke appeared quite bewildered. "What is it, Don Picador?" at length we could hear Campana say, "What is it? Is it my poor dear Maria who is worse, or what?—speak man —may my wife enter?"

"Si, si—yes, yes," said the afflicted Don Picador —"yes, yes, let her go in—send—for I am unable to think or act—send one of my people back post to Santiago for the doctor—haste, haste. *Sangre, hecha sangre por la Bocca.*"

"Why did you not say so before?" rejoined Campana, pathetically.

Here his wife called loudly to her husband, "*Ricardo, Ricardo, por amor de su alma—manda por el medico*—she has burst a blood vessel, Maria is dying!"

"Let me mount myself; I will go myself;—And the excellent man pushed for the door, when the poor heart broken Don Picador clung to his knees.

"No, no, don't leave me. Send some one else"———

"Take care man, let me go"——

N—— and I volunteered in a breath—"No, no, I will go myself," continued Don Ricardo; "let go, man—The old creature must surely be crazed,—*el viejo no vale.*"

"Here, here, help, Don Ricardo!" cried his wife.

Off started N—— for the doctor, and into the room rushed Don Picador and Campana, and from the sounds in the sick-chamber, all was bustle and confusion; at length the former appeared to be endeavouring to lift the poor sufferer, so as to enable her to sit up in bed; in the meantime her coughing had gradually abated into a low suffocating convulsive gasp.

"So, so, lift her up, man," we could hear Campana say; "lift her up—quick—or she will be suffocated."

At length, in a moment of great irritation excited on the one hand by his intense interest in the poor suffering girl, and anger at the peevish, helpless Don Picador, Don Ricardo, to our unutterable surprise, rapped out in *gude* broad Scotch, as he brushed away Senor Cangrejo from the bedside with a violence that spun him out of the door, exclaiming, "*The auld doited deevil is as fussionless as a docken.*"

My jaw dropped—I was thunder-struck—Bang's eye met mine—"Murder," quoth Bang, so soon as his astonishment let him collect breath enough, "and here I have been for two whole days practising Spanish, to my great improvement no doubt upon a Scotchman—how edified *he* must have been!"

"But the *docken*, man," said I—"*fussionless as a docken*—how classic! what an exclamation to proceed from the mouth of a solemn Don!"

"No gibes regarding the docken," promptly chimed in Bang; "it is a highly respectable vegetable, let me tell you, and useful on occasion, which is more."

The noise in the room ceased, and presently Campana joined us. "We must proceed," said he, "it will never do for you to deliver the jewels *now*, Mr.

Cringle; she is too much excited already, even from seeing me."

But it was more easy to determine on proceeding than to put it in execution, for a heavy cloud that had been overhanging the small valley the whole morning, had by this time spread out and covered the entire face of nature like a sable pall; the birds of the air flew low, and seemed to be perfectly gorged with the superabundance of flies, which were thickly betaking themselves for shelter under the evergreen leaves of the bushes. All the winged creation, great and small, were fast betaking themselves to the shelter of the leaves and branches of the trees. The cattle were speeding to the hollows under the impending rocks; negroes, men, women, and children, were hurrying with their hoes on their shoulders past the windows to their huts. Several large blood-hounds had ventured into the hall, and were crouching with a low whine at our feet. The large carrion crows were the only living things which seemed to brave the approaching *chubasco*, and were soaring high up in the heavens, appearing to touch the black agitated fringe of the lowering thunder clouds. All other kinds of winged creatures, parrots, and pigeons, and cranes, had vanished by this time under the thickest trees, and into the deepest coverts, and the wild-ducks were shooting past in long lines, piercing the thick air with outstretched neck and clanging wing.

Suddenly the wind fell, and the sound of the waterfall increased, and grew rough and loud, and the undefinable rushing noise that precedes a heavy fall of rain in the tropics, the voice of the wilderness, moaned through the high woods, until at length the clouds sank upon the valley in boiling mists, rolling

halfway down the surrounding hills; and the water of the stream, whose scanty rill but an instant before hissed over the precipice in a small transparent riband of clear glass-green, sprinkled with white foam, and then threaded its way round the large rocks in its capacious channel, like a silver eel twisting through a desert, now changed in a moment to a dark turgid chocolate colour; and even as we stood and looked, lo! a column of water from the mountains, pitched in thunder over the face of the precipice, making the earth tremble, and driving up from the rugged face of the everlasting rocks in smoke, and forcing the air into eddies and sudden blasts, which tossed the branches of the trees that overhung it, as they were dimly seen through clouds of drizzle, as if they had been shaken by a tempest, although there was not a breath stirring elsewhere out of heaven; while little wavering spiral wreaths of mist rose up thick from the surface of the boiling pool at the bottom of the cataract, like miniature water-spouts, until they were dispersed by the agitation of the air above.

At length the swollen torrent rolled roaring down the narrow valley, filling the whole water-course, about fifty yards wide, and advancing with a solid front a fathom *high*—a fathom *deep* does not convey the idea—like a stream of lava, or as one may conceive of the Red Sea, when, at the stretching forth of the hand of the prophet of the Lord, its mighty waters rolled back and stood heaped up as a wall to the host of Israel.

The channel of the stream, which but a minute before I could have leaped across, was the next instant filled, and utterly impassable.

"You can't possibly move," said Don Picador;

"you can neither go on nor retreat; you must stay until the river subsides." And the rain now began pattering in large drops, like scattering shots preceding an engagement, on the wooden shingles with which the house was roofed, gradually increasing to a loud rushing noise, which, as the rooms were not ceiled, prevented a word being heard.

Don Ricardo began to fret and fidget most awfully,—"beginning of the *season*—Why, we may not get away for a week, and all the ships will be kept back in their loading."

All this time, the poor sufferer's tearing cough was heard in the lulls of the rain; but it gradually became less and less severe, and the lady of the house; and Senora Campana, and Don Picador's daughter, at length slid into the room on tiptoe, leaving one of Don Ricardo's nieces in the room with the sick person.

"She is asleep—Hush." The weather continued as bad as ever, and we passed a very comfortless forenoon of it; Picador, Campana, and myself, perambulating the large dark hall, while the ladies were clustered together in a corner with their work. At length the weather cleared, and I could get a glimpse of mine hostess and her fair daughter. The former was a very handsome woman, about forty: she was tall, and finely formed; her ample figure set off by the very simple, yet, to my taste, very elegant dress formerly described: it was neither more nor less than the plain black silk petticoat over a chemise, made full at the bosom, with a great quantity of lace frills; her dark glossy hair was gathered on the crown of her head in one long braid, twisted round and round, and rising up like a small turret. Over all she wore

a loose shawl of yellow silk crape. But the daughter, I never shall forget her. Tall and full, and magnificently shaped—every motion was instinct with grace. Her beautiful black hair hung a yard down her back, long and glossy, in three distinct braids, while it was shaded Madonna-like off her high and commanding forehead; her eyebrows—to use little Reefy's simile—looked as if cut out of a mouse's skin; and her eyes themselves, large, dark, and soft, yet brilliant and sparkling at the same time, however contradictory this may read; her nose was straight, and her cheeks firm and oval, and her mouth, her full lips, her ivory teeth, her neck and bosom, were perfect, the latter if any thing giving promise of too matronly a womanhood; but at the time I saw her, nothing could have been more beautiful; and, above all, there was an *inexpressible* charm in the clear transparent darkness of her colourless skin, *into which you thought you could look;* her shoulders, and the upper part of her arms, were peculiarly beautiful. Nothing is so exquisitely lovely as the upper part of a beautiful woman's arm, and yet we have lived to see this admirable feature shrouded and lost in those abominable gigots.—Why won't you, Master Kit North, lend a hand, and originate a crusade against those vile appendages? I will lead into action if you like,—"Wo unto the women that sew pillows to all arm-holes," Ezekiel, xiii. 18. May I venture on such a quotation in such a place?—She was extremely like her brother; and her fine face was overspread with the pale cast of thought—a settled melancholy, like the shadow of a cloud in a calm day on a summer landscape, mantled over her fine features; and although she moved with the air of a princess, and was possessed of that natural politeness

which far surpasses all artificial polish, yet the heaviness of her heart was apparent in every motion, as well as in all she said.

Many people labour under an unaccountable delusion, imagining, in their hallucination, that a Frenchwoman, for instance, or even an Englishwoman—nay, some in their madness have been heard to say that a Scotchwoman—has been known to *walk*. Egregious errors all! An Irishwoman of the true Milesian descent *can walk* a step or two sometimes, but all other women, fair or brown, short or tall, stout or thin, only stump, shuffle, jig, or amble—none but a Spaniard can *walk*.

Once or twice she tried to enter into conversation with me on indifferent subjects; but there was a constant tendency to approach (against her own prearranged determination) the one, all-absorbing one, the fate of her poor brother. "Oh, had you but known him, Mr. Cringle—had you but known him in his boyhood, before bad company had corrupted him!" exclaimed she, after having asked me if he died penitent, and she turned away and wept. "*Francisca,*" said a low hoarse female voice from the other room; "*Francisca, ven aca, mi quirida hermana.*" The sweet girl rose, and sped across the floor with the grace of Taglioni, (oh the *legs taglionis!* as poor dear Bang would have ventured to have said, if he had been extant until now,) and presently returned, and whispered something to her mother, who rose and drew Don Picador aside. The waspish old man shook himself clear of his wife, as he said, with indecent asperity—

"No, no; she will but make a fool of herself."

His wife drew herself up,—

"She never made a fool of herself, Don Picador, but once; and God forgive those who were the cause of it. It is not kind of you, it is not kind."

"Well, well," rejoined the querulous old man; "do as you will, do as you will,—always crossing me, always crossing."

His wife took no farther notice, but stepped across the room to me,—"Our poor dying Maria knows you are here; and probably you are not aware that *he* wrote to her after his"—her voice quavered—"after his condemnation, the night before he suffered, that you were the only one who showed him kindness; and she has also read the newspapers giving an account of the trial. She wishes to see you—will you pleasure her? Yet it will be too agitating. Senora Campana has made her acquainted that you are the bearer of some trinkets belonging to him, from which she infers you witnessed his last moments, as one of them, she was told, was her picture, poor dear girl; and she knew *that must have grown to his heart till the last.* But it will be too agitating. I will try and dissuade her from the interview until the Doctor comes, at all events."

The worthy lady stepped again into Maria's apartment, and I could not avoid hearing what passed.

"My dear Maria, Mr. Cringle has no objection to wait on you; but after your severe attack this morning, I don't think it will be wise. Delay it until Dr. Bergara comes, at any rate—until the evening, Maria."

"Mother," she said, in a weak, plaintive voice, although husky from the phlegm which was fast coagulating in her throat—"Mother, I already have ceased to be of this world; I am dying, dearest mo-

ther, fast dying; and oh, thou All-good and All-merciful Being, against whom I have fearfully sinned, would that the last struggle were now o'er, and that my weary spirit were released, and my shame hidden in the silent tomb, and my sufferings and very name forgotten!" She paused and gasped for breath; I thought it was all over with her; but she rallied again and proceeded—"Time is rapidly ebbing from me, dearest mother,—for mother I must call you, more than a mother have you been to me—and the ocean of eternity is opening to my view. If I am to see him at all, I must see him now; I shall be more agitated by the expectation of the interview than by seeing him at once. Oh! let me see him now, let me look on one who witnessed *his* last moments."

I could see Senora Cangrejo where she stood. She crossed her hands on her bosom, and looked up towards heaven, and then turned mournfully towards me, and beckoned me to approach. I entered the small room, which had been fitted up by the poor girl with some taste; the furniture was better than any I had seen in a Spanish house before, and there was a mat on the floor, and some exquisite miniatures and small landscapes on the walls. It was her boudoir, opening apparently into a bedroom beyond. It was lighted by a large open unglazed window, with a row of wooden balustrades beyond, forming part of a small balcony. A Carmelite friar, a venerable old man, with the hot tears fast falling from his old eyes over his wrinkled cheeks, whom I afterwards found to be the excellent *Padre Carera*, sat in a large chair by the bedside, with a silver cup in his hand, beside which lay a large crucifix of the same metal; he had just administered extreme unction, and the *viaticum*,

he fondly hoped, would prove a passport for his dear child to another and a better world. As I entered he rose, held out his hand to me, and moved round to the bottom of the bed.

The shutters had been opened, and, with a suddenness which no one can comprehend who has not lived in these climates, the sun now shone brightly on the flowers and garden plants which grew in a range of pots on the balcony, and lighted up the pale face of a lovely girl, lovely even in the jaws of death, as she lay with her face towards the light, supported in a reclining position on cushions, on a red morocco mattress, laid on a sort of frame or bed.

> "Light was her form, and darkly delicate
> That brow, whereon her native sun had sat,
> But had not marr'd"——

She was tall, so far as I could judge, but, oh, how attenuated! Her lower limbs absolutely made no impression on the mattress, to which her frame appeared to cling, giving a ghastly conspicuousness to the œdematous swelling of her feet, and to her person, for, alas! she was in a way to have become a mother—

> "The offspring of *his* wayward youth,
> When he betray'd Bianca's truth;
> The maid whose folly could confide
> In *him*, who made her not his bride."

Her hand grasping her pocket-handkerchief, drenched, alas, with blood, hung over the side of the bed, thin and pale, with her long taper fingers as transparent as if they had been fresh cut alabaster, with the blue veins winding through her wrists, and her bosom wasted and shrunk, and her neck no thicker than her

arm, with the pulsations of the large arteries as plain and evident as if the skin had been a film, and her beautiful features, although now sharpened by the near approaching death agony, her lovely mouth, her straight nose, her arched eyebrows, black, like pencilled jet lines, and her small ears, and, oh, who can describe her rich black raven hair, lying combed out, and spread all over the bed and pillow? She was dressed in a long loose gown of white crape; it looked like a winding-sheet; but the fire of her eyes—I have purposely not ventured to describe them—the unearthly brilliancy of her large, full, swimming eye!

When I entered, I bowed, and remained standing near the door. She said something, but in so low a voice, that I could not catch the words; and when I stepped nearer, on purpose to hear more distinctly, all at once the blood mantled in her cheeks, and forehead, and throat, like the last gleam of the setting sun; but it faded as rapidly, and once more she lay pale as her smock—

"Yet not such blush, as mounts when health would show
All the heart's hue in that delightful glow;
But 'twas a hectic tint of secret care,
That for a burning moment fevered there;
And the wild sparkle of her eye seemed caught
From high, and lightened with electric thought;
Though its black orb these long low lashes fringe
Had tempered with a melancholy tinge."

Her voice was becoming more and more weak, she said, so she must be prompt. "You have some trinkets for me, Mr. Cringle?" I presented them. She kissed the crucifix fervently, and then looked mournfully on her own miniature. "This was thought like *once*, Mr. Cringle.—Are the newspaper accounts of

his trial correct?" she next asked. I answered, that in the main facts they were. "And do you believe in the commission of all these alleged atrocities by him?" I remained silent. "Yes, they are but too true. Hush, hush," said she,—"look there."

I did as she requested. There, glancing bright in the sunshine, a most beautiful butterfly fluttered in the air, in the very middle of the open window.—When we first saw it, it was flitting gaily and happily amongst the plants and flowers that were blooming in the balcony, but it gradually became more and more slow on the wing, and at last poised itself so unusually steadily for an insect of its class, that even had Maria not spoken, it would have attracted my attention. Below it, on the window sill, near the wall, with head erect, and its little basilisk eyes upturned towards the lovely fly, crouched a camelion lizard, its beautiful body, when I first looked at it, was a bright sea-green. It moved into the sunshine, a little away from the shade of the laurel bush, which grew on the side it first appeared on, and suddenly the back became transparent amber, the legs and belly still continuing green. From its breast under the chin, it every now and then shot out a semicircular film of a bright scarlet colour, like a leaf of a tulip, stretched vertically, or the pectoral fin of a fish.

This was evidently a decoy, and the poor fly was gradually drawn down towards it, either under the impression of its being, in reality, a flower, or impelled by some impulse which it could not resist. It gradually fluttered nearer and more near, the reptile remaining all the while steady as a stone, until it made a sudden spring, and, in the next moment, the small mealy wings were quivering on each side of

the camelion's tiny jaws. While in the act of gorging its prey, a little fork, like a wire, was projected from the opposite corner of the window; presently a small round black snout, with a pair of little fiery-blasting eyes, appeared, and a thin black neck glancing in the sun. The lizard saw it. I could fancy it trembled. Its body became of a dark blue, then ashy pale; the imitation of the flower, the gaudy fin was withdrawn, it appeared to shrink back as far as it could, but it was nailed or fascinated to the window sill, for its feet did not move. The head of the snake approached, with its long forked tongue shooting out, and shortening, and with a low hissing noise. By this time, about two feet of its body were visible, lying with its white belly on the wooden beam, moving forward with a small horizontal wavy motion, the head and six inches of the neck being a little raised. I shrunk back from the serpent, but no one else seemed to have any dread of it; indeed, I afterwards learned, that this kind being good mousers, and otherwise quite harmless, were, if any thing, encouraged about houses in the country. I looked again; its open mouth was now within an inch of the lizard, which by this time seemed utterly paralyzed and motionless; the next instant its head was drawn into the snake's mouth, and gradually the whole body disappeared, as the reptile gorged it, and I could perceive from the lump which gradually moved down the snake's neck, that it had been sucked into its stomach. Involuntarily I raised my hand, when the whole suddenly disappeared.

I turned I could scarcely tell why, to look at the dying girl. A transient flush had again lit up her pale wasted face. She was evidently greatly excited.

"Can you read me that riddle, Mr. Cringle? Does no analogy present itself to you between what you have seen, between the mysterious power possessed by these subtile reptiles, and—look—look again."

A large and still more lovely butterfly suddenly rose from beneath where the snake had vanished, all glittering in the dazzling sunshine, and after fluttering for a moment, floated steadily up into the air, and disappeared in the blue sky. My eye followed it as long as it was visible, and when it once more declined to where we had seen the snake. I saw a most splendid dragonfly, about three inches long, like a golden bodkin, with its gauze-like wings, moving so quickly, as it hung steadily poised in midair, like a hawk preparing to stoop, that the body seemed to be surrounded by silver tissue, or a bright halo, while it glanced in the sunbeam.

"Can you not read it yet, Mr. Cringle? can you not read my story in the fate of the first beautiful fly, and the miserable end of my Federico, in that of the lizard? And oh, may the last appearance of that etherial thing, which but now rose, and melted into the lovely sky, be a true type of what I shall be. But that poor insect, that remains there suspended between heaven and earth, shall I say hell, what am I to think of it?"

The dragon-fly was still there. She continued—"*In purgatorio, ah Dios, tu quedas en purgatorio,*" as if the fly had represented the unhappy young pirate's soul in limbo. Oh, let no one smile at the quaintness of the dying fancy of the poor heart-crushed girl. The weather began to lower again, the wind came past us moaningly, the sun was obscured—large drops of rain fell heavily into the

room—a sudden dazzling flash of lightning took place, *and the dragon-fly was no longer there.* A long, low, wild cry was heard. I started, and my flesh creeped. The cry was repeated. "*Es el—El mismo, y ningun otra, me venga Federico, me venga, mi querido,*" shrieked poor Maria, with a supernatural energy, and with such piercing distinctness, that it was heard shrill even above the rolling thunder.

I turned to look at Maria—another flash. It glanced on the crucifix which the old priest had elevated at the foot of the bed, full in her view. It was nearer, the thunder was louder. "Is that the raindrops that are falling heavily on the floor through the open window?" Oh, no! it is her warm heart's blood, which was bubbling from her mouth like a crimson fountain. Her pale fingers were clasped on her bosom in the attitude of prayer—a gentle quiver of her frame—and the poor broken-hearted girl, and her unborn babe, "slept the sleep that knows no waking."

CHAPTER XVII.

SCENES IN CUBA.

Ariel. ——————— Safely in harbour
Is the King's ship.—In the deep nook where once
Thou calledst me up at midnight to fetch dew
From the still vexed Bermoothes—there she's hid
The Tempest.

THE spirit had, indeed, fled—the ethereal essence had departed—and the poor wasted and blood-stained husk which lay before us, could no longer be moved by our sorrows, or gratified by our sympathy. Yet I stood riveted to the spot, until I was aroused by the deep-toned voice of *Padre* Carera, who, lifting up his hands towards heavens, addressed the Almighty in extempore prayer, beseeching his mercy to our erring sister who had just departed. The unusualness of this startled me.—"As the tree falls, so must it lie," had been the creed of my forefathers, and was mine; but now for the first time I heard a clergyman wrestling in mental agony, and interceding with the God who hath said, "Repent before the night cometh in which no man can work," for a single creature, whose worn-out frame was now as a clod of the valley. But

I had little time for consideration, as presently all the negro servants of the establishment set up a loud howl, as if they had lost their nearest and dearest.—"Oh, our poor dear young mistress is dead! She has gone to the bosom of the Virgin!—She is gone to be happy!"—"Then why the deuce make such a yelling?"—quoth Bang in the other room, when this had been translated to him. Glad to leave the chamber of death, I entered the large hall, where I had left our friend.

"I say, Tom—awful work. Hear how the rain pours, and—murder—such a flash! Why, in Jamaica, we don't startle greatly at lightning, but absolutely I heard it hiss—there, again"—the noise of the thunder stopped farther colloquy, and the wind now burst down the valley with a loud roar.

Don Ricardo joined us. "My good friends—we are in a scrape here—what is to be done?—a melancholy affair altogether."—Bang's curiosity here fairly got the better of him.

"I say, *Don Ricardibus*—do—beg pardon, though—do give over this humbugging out-landish lingo of yours—speak like a Christian, your mother tongue, and leave off your Spanish, which *now*, since I know it is all a *bam*, seems to sit as strangely on you as my grandmother's *toupee* would on Tom Cringle's Mary."

"Now do pray, Mr. Bang," said I, when Don Ricardo broke in—

"Why, Mr. Bang, I am, as you now know, a Scotchman."

"How do I know any such thing—that is, for a certainty—while you keep cruising amongst so many lingoes, as Tom there says?"

"The *docken*, man," said I.—Don Ricardo smiled.

"I *am* a Scotchman, my dear sir; and the same person who in his youth was neither more nor less than wee Richy Cloche, in the long town of Kirkaldy, is in his old age *Don Ricardo Campana* of St. Jago de Cuba. But more of this anon,—at present we are in the house of mourning, and alas the day! that it should be so."

By this time the storm had increased most fearfully, and as Don Ricardo, Aaron, and myself, sat in the dark damp corner of the large gloomy hall, we could scarcely see each other, for the lightning had now ceased, and the darkness was so thick, that had it not been for the light from the large funeral wax tapers, which had been instantly lit upon poor Maria's death, in the room where she lay, that streamed through the open door, we should have been unable to see our very fingers before us.

"What is that?" said Campana: "heard you nothing, gentlemen?"

In the lulls of the rain and the blast, the same long low cry was heard, which had startled me by Maria's bedside, and occasioned the sudden and fatal exertion which had been the cause of the bursting out afresh of the blood-vessel.

"Why," said I, "it is little more than three o'clock in the afternoon yet, dark as it is; let us sally out, Mr. Bang, for I verily believe that the hallo we have heard is my Captain's voice, and, if I conjecture rightly, he must have arrived at the other side of the river, probably with the Doctor."

"Why, Tom," quoth Aaron, "it *is* only three in the afternoon, as you say, although by the sky I could almost vouch for its being midnight,—but I don't like that shouting—Did you ever read of a water-kelpie, Don *Richy*?"

"Poo, poo, nonsense," said the Don; "Mr. Cringle is, I fear, right enough." At this moment the wind thundered at the door and window-shutters, and howled amongst the neighbouring trees and round the roof, as if it would have blown the house down upon our devoted heads. The cry was again heard, during a momentary pause.

"Zounds!" said Bang, "it *is* the skipper's voice, as sure as fate—he must be in danger—let us go and see, Tom."

"Take me with you," said Campana,—the foremost always when any good deed was to be done,—and, in place of clapping on his great-coat to meet the storm, to our unutterable surprise, he began to disrobe himself, all to his trousers and large straw hat. He then called one of the servants, "*trae me un lasso.*" The *lasso*, a long thong of plaited hide, was forthwith brought; he coiled it up in his left hand. "Now Pedro," said he to the negro servant who had fetched it, (a tall strapping fellow,) "you and Gaspar follow me. Gentlemen, are you ready?" Gaspar appeared, properly accoutred, with a long pole in one hand and a thong similar to Don Ricardo's in the other, he as well as his comrade being stark naked all to their waistclothes. "Ah, well done, my sons," said Don Ricardo, as both the negroes prepared to follow their master. So off we started to the door, although we heard the *tormenta* raging without with appalling fury. Bang undid the latch, and the next moment he was flat on his back, the large leaf having flown open with tremendous violence, capsizing him like an infant.

The *Padre* from the inner chamber came to our assistance, and by our joint exertions we at length got the door *to* again and baricaded, after which we

made our exit from the lee-side of the house by a window. Under other circumstances, it would have been difficult to refrain from laughing at the appearance we made. We were all drenched in an instant after we left the shelter of the house, and there was old Campana, naked to the waist, with his large *sombrero* and long pigtail hanging down his back, like a mandarin of twenty buttons. Next followed his two black assistants, naked as I have described them all three with their coils of rope in their hands, like a hangman and his deputies; then advanced friend Bang and myself, without our coats or hats, with handkerchiefs tied round our heads, and our bodies bent down so as to stem the gale as strongly as we could.

But the planting attorney, a great schemer, a kind of Will Wimble in his way, had thought fit, of all things in the world, to bring his umbrella, which the wind, as might have been expected, reversed most unceremoniously, the moment he attempted to hoist it, and tore it from the staff; so that on the impulse of the moment, he had to clutch the flying red silk, and thrust his head through the centre, where the stick had stood, as if he had been some curious flower. As we turned the corner of the house, the full force of the storm met us right in the teeth, when flap flew Don Ricardo's hat past us; but the two blackamoors had taken the precaution to strap each of theirs down with a strong grass lanyard. We continued to work to windward, while every now and then the hollo came past us on the gale louder and louder, until it guided us to the fording which we had crossed on our first arrival. We stopped there;—the red torrent was rushing tumultuously past us, but we saw nothing

save a few wet and shivering negroes on the opposite side, who had sheltered themselves under a cliff, and were busily employed in attempting to light a fire. The hallooing continued. "Why, what *can* be wrong?" at length said Don Ricardo, and he shouted to the people on the opposite side.

He might as well have spared his breath, for, although they saw his gestures and the motion of his lips, they no more heard him than we did them, as they very considerately, in return, made mouths at us, bellowing, no doubt, that they could not hear us.

"Don Ricardo!—Don Ricardo!" at this crisis sung out Gaspar, who had clambered up the rock to have a peep about him, "*Ave Maria—Alla son dos pobres, que peresquen pronto, si nosotros no pueden ayudarlos.*"

"Whereabout?" said Campana; "whereabout?—speak, man, speak!"

"Down in the valley—about a quarter of a league, I see two men on a large rock, in the middle of the stream; the wind is in that direction, it must be them we heard."

"God be gracious to us! true enough—true enough; let us go to them, then, my children." And we again all cantered off after the excellent Don Ricardo. But before we could reach the spot, we had to make a *detour*, and come down upon it from the precipitous brow of the beetling cliff above, for there was no beach nor shore to the swollen river, which was here very deep and surged, rushed under the hollow bank with comparatively little noise, which was the reason why we heard the cries so distinctly.

The unfortunates who were in peril, whoever they might be, seemed to comprehend our motions, for one

of them held out a white handkerchief, which I immediately answered by a similar signal, when the shouting ceased, until, guided by the negroes, we reached the verge of the cliff, and looked down from the red crumbling bank on the foaming water, as it swept past beneath. It was here about thirty yards broad, divided by a rocky wedgelike islet, on which grew a profusion of dark bushes and one large tree, whose topmost branches were on a level with us where we stood. This tree was divided, about twelve feet from the root, into two limbs, in the fork of which sat, like a big monkey, no less a personage than Captain N—— himself, wet and dripping, with his clothes besmeared with mud, and shivering with cold. At the foot of the tree sat, in rueful mood, a small antique beau of an old man in a coat which had once been blue silk, wearing breeches the original colour of which no man could tell, and without his wig, his clear bald pate shining amidst the surrounding desolation like an ostrich's egg. Beside these worthies stood two trembling way-worn mules with drooping heads, their long ears hanging down most disconsolately. The moment we came in sight, the skipper hailed us:

"Why, I am hoarse with bawling, Don Ricardo, but here am I and *el Doctor Pavo Real*, in as sorry a plight as any two gentlemen need be. On attempting the ford two hours ago, blockheads as we were—beg pardon, Don Pavo"—the Doctor bowed and grinned like a baboon—"we had nearly been drowned; indeed, we should have been drowned entirely, had we not brought up on this island of Barataria here.—But how is the young lady? tell me that," said the excellent-hearted fellow, even in the midst of his own danger.

"Mind *yourself*, my beautiful child," cried Bang. "How are we to get *you* on *terra firma?*"

"Poo—in the easiest way possible," rejoined he, with true seaman-like self-possession. "I see you have ropes. Tom Cringle, heave me the end of the line which Don Ricardo carries, will you?"

"No, no—I can do that myself," said Don Ricardo, and with a swing he hove the leathern noose at the skipper, and whipped it over his neck in a twinkling. The Scotch Spaniard, I saw, was pluming himself on his skill, but N—— was up to him; for in an instant he dropped out of it, while in slipping through he let it fall over a broken limb of the tree.

"Such an eel—such an eel!", shouted the attendant negroes, both expert hands with the *lasso* themselves.

"Now, Don Ricardo, since I am not to be had, make your end of the thong fast round that large stone there." Campana did so. "Ah! that will do." And so saying, the skipper warped himself to the top of the cliff with great agility. He was no sooner in safety himself, however, than the idea of having left the poor Doctor in peril flashed on him.

"I must return—I must return! If the river rises, the *body* will be drowned out and out."

And, notwithstanding our entreaties, he *did* return as he came; and, descending the tree, began apparently to argue with the little *Medico*, and to endeavour to persuade him to ascend, and to make his escape as the Captain himself had done; but it would not do. *Pavo Real*—as brave a little man as ever was seen—made many salaams and obeisances, but move he would not. He shook his head repeatedly, in a very solemn way, as if he had said, "My very excellent friends, I am much obliged to you, but it is impossi-

ble: my dignity would be compromised by such a proceeding."

Presently, N—— appeared to wax very emphatic, and pointed to a pinnacle of limestone rock, which had stood out like a small steeple above the surface of the flashing, dark red eddies, when we first arrived on the spot, but now only stopped the water with a loud gurgle, the top rising and disappearing as the stream surged past, like a buoy *jaugling* in a tide-way. The small man shook his head, but the water now rose so rapidly, that there was scarcely dry standing room for the two poor devils of mules, while the Doctor and the skipper had the greatest difficulty in finding a footing for themselves.

Time and circumstances began to press, and N——, after another unavailing attempt to persuade the Doctor, began apparently to rouse himself, and muster his energies. He first drove the mules forcibly into the stream, at the side opposite to where we stood, which was the deepest water, and least broken by rocks and stones, and we had the pleasure to see them scramble out safe and sound: he then put his hand to his mouth, and hailed us to throw him a rope—it was done—he caught it, and then by a significant gesture to Campana, gave him to understand that now was the time. The Don, comprehending him, now hove his noose with great precision right over the little Doctor's head; and before he recovered from his surprise, the Captain slipped it under his arms, and signed to haul taught, while the *Medico* kicked, and spurred, and backed like a restive horse. At one and the same moment, N—— made fast a *guy* round his waist, and we hoisted away, while he hauled on the other line, so that we landed the Lilliputian Esculapius safely on the top of the bank, with the wind nearly out of his

body, from his violent exertions and the running of the noose.

It was now the work of a moment for the Captain to ascend the tree and again warp himself ashore, when he set himself to apologize with all his might and main, pleading strong necessity; and having succeeded in pacifying the offended dignity of the Doctor, we turned towards the house.

"Look out there," sung out Campana sharply. Time, indeed, thought I, for right a-head of us, as if an invisible gigantic ploughshare had passed over the woods, a valley or chasm was suddenly opened down the hillside with a noise like thunder, and branches and whole limbs of trees were instantly torn away, and tossed into the air like straws. "Down on your noses, my fine fellows," cried the skipper. We were all flat in an instant except the *Medico*, the stubborn little brute, who *stood* until the tornado reached him, when in a twinkling he was cast on his back, with a violence, as I thought, to have driven his breath for ever and aye out of his body. While we lay we heard all kind of things hurtle past us through the air, pieces of timber, branches of trees, coffee bushes, and even stones.—Presently it lulled again, and we got upright to look around us.

"How will the old house stand all this, Don Ricardo?" said the drenched skipper. He had to shout to be heard. The Don was too busy to answer, but once more strode on towards the dwelling, as if he expected something even worse than we had experienced to be still awaiting us. By the time we reached it, it was full of negroes, men, women, and children, whose huts had already been destroyed, poor, drenched, miserable devils, with scarcely any clothing; and, to crown our comfort, we found the roof

leaking in many places. By this time the night began to fall, and our prospects were far from flattering. The rain had entirely ceased, nor was there any lightning, but the storm was most tremendous, blowing in gusts, and veering round from east to north with the speed of thought. The force of the gale, however, gradually declined, until the wind subsided altogether, and every thing was still. The low murmured conversation of the poor negroes who environed us, was heard distinctly; the hard breathing of the sleeping children could even be distinguished. But I was by no means sure that the hurricane was over, and Don Ricardo and the rest seemed to think as I did, for there was not a word interchanged between us for some time.

"Do you hear that?" at length said Aaron Bang, as a low moaning sound rose wailing into the night air. It approached and grew louder.

"The voice of the approaching tempest amongst the higher branches of the trees," said the Captain. The rushing noise overhead increased, but still all was so calm where we sat, that you could have heard a pin drop. Poo, thought I, it *has* passed over us after all—no fear now, when one reflects how completely sheltered we are. Suddenly, however, the lights in the room where the body lay were blown out, and the roof groaned and creaked as it had been the bulkheads of a ship in a tempestuous sea.

"We shall have to cut and run from this anchorage presently, after all," said I; "the house will never hold on till morning."

The words were scarcely out of my mouth, when, as if a thunderbolt had struck it, one of the windows in the hall was driven in with a roar, as if the falls of Niagara had been pouring overhead, and the tempest

having thus forced an entrance, the roof of that part of the house where we sat was blown up, as if by gunpowder—ay, in the twinkling of an eye; and there we were with the bare walls, and the angry heaven overhead, and the rain descending in bucketsful. Fortunately, two large joists or couples, being deeply embedded in the substance of the walls, remained, when the rafters and ridge-pole were torn away, or we must have been crushed in the ruins.

There was again a deathlike lull, the wind fell to a small melancholy sough amongst the tree tops, but, as before, where we sat, there was not a breath stirring. So complete was the calm now, that after a light had been struck, and placed on the floor in the middle of the room, showing the surrounding group of shivering half naked savages, with fearful distinctness, the flame shot up straight as an arrow, clear and bright, although we heard the distant roar of the storm as it rushed over the mountain above us.

This unexpected stillness frightened the women more than the fierceness of the gale at the loudest had done.

"We must go forth," said *Senora* Campana; "the elements are only gathering themselves for a more dreadful hurricane than what we have already experienced. We must go forth to the little chapel in the wood, or the next burst may, and will bury us under the walls; and she moved towards Maria's room, where, by this time, lights had again been placed. "We must move the body," we could hear her say; "we must all proceed to the chapel; in a few minutes the storm will be raging again as loud as ever."

"And my wife is very right," said Don Ricardo; "so Gaspar, call the other people; have some mats,

and *quatres*, and mattresses carried down to the chapel, and we shall all remove, for with half of the roof gone, it is but tempting the Almighty to remain here longer."

The word was passed, and we were soon under weigh, four negroes leading the van, carrying the uncoffined body of the poor girl on a sofa; while two servants, with large splinters of a sort of resinous wood for flambeaux, walked by the side. Next followed the women of the family, covered up with all the cloaks and spare garments that could be collected; then Don Picador Cangrejo, with Ricardo Campana, the skipper, Aaron Bang, and myself; the procession being closed by the household negroes, with more lights which all burned steadily and clear.

We descended through a magnificent natural avenue of lofty trees (whose brown moss-grown trunks and fantastic boughs were strongly lit up by the blaze of the resinous torch; and the first white splinter-marks where the branches had been torn off by the storm, glanced bright and clear, and the raindrops on the dark leaves sparkled like diamonds) towards the river, along whose brink the brim-full red foaming waters rushed past us close by the edge of the path. After walking about four hundred yards, we came to a small but massive chapel, fronting the river, the back part resting against a rocky bank, with two superb cypress trees growing, one on each side of the door; we entered, Padre Carera leading the way. The whole area of the interior of the building did not exceed a parallelogram of twenty feet by twelve. At the eastern end, fronting the door, there was a small altarpiece of hard wood, richly ornamented with silver, and there was one or two bare wooden benches standing on the tiled floor; but the chief se-

curity we had that the building would withstand the storm, consisted in its having no window or aperture whatsoever, excepting two small *ports*, one on each side of the altarpiece, and the door, which was a massive frame of hard wood-planking. The body was deposited at the foot of the altar, and the ladies, having been wrapped up in their cloaks and blankets, were safely lodged in *quatres*, while *we*, the gentlemen of the comfortless party, seated ourselves, disconsolately enough, on the wooden benches.

The door was made fast, after the servants had kindled a blazing wood-fire on the floor; and although the flickering light cast by the wax tapers in the six large silver candlesticks which were planted beside the bier, as it blended with the red glare of the fire, and fell strongly on the pale uncovered features of the corpse, and on the anxious faces of the women, was often startling enough, yet being conscious of a certain degree of security, from the thickness of the walls, we made up our minds, as well as we could, to spend the night where we were.

"I say, Tom Cringle," said Aaron Bang, "all the females are snug there, you see; we have a blazing fire on the hearth, and here is some comfort for *we* men slaves;" whereupon he produced two bottles of brandy. Don Ricardo Campana, with whom Bang seemed now to be absolutely *in league*, or, in vulgar phrase, as thick as pickpockets, had brought a goblet of water, and a small silver drinking cup, with him, so we passed the *creature* round, and tried all we could to while away the tedious night. There had been a calm for a full hour at this time, and the Captain had stepped out to reconnoitre, and on his return he had reported that the swollen stream had very much subsided.

"Well, we shall get away, I hope, to morrow morning, after all," whispered Bang.

He had scarcely spoken when it began to pelt and rain again, as if a water-spout had burst overhead, but there was no wind.

"Come, that is the clearing up of it," said Cloche.

At this precise moment the priest was sitting with folded arms, beyond the body, on a stool or tressle, in the little alcove or recess where it lay. Right overhead was one of the small round apertures in the gable of the chapel, which, opening on the bank, appeared to the eye a round black spot in the white-washed wall. The bright wax-lights shed a strong lustre on the worthy *Clerico's* figure, face, and fine bald head which shone like silver, while the deeper tint of the embers on the floor was reflected in ruby tints from the large silver crucifix that hung at his waist. The rushing of the swollen river prevented me hearing distinctly, but it occurred to me, once or twice, that a strange gurgling sound proceeded from the aforesaid round aperture. The *Padre* seemed to hear it also, for now and then he looked up, and once he rose, but apparently unable to distinguish any thing, he sat down again. However, my attention had been excited, and half asleep as I was, I kept glimmering in the direction of the *Clerico*.

The Captain's deep snore had gradually lengthened out, so as to vouch for *his* forgetfulness, and Bang and Don Ricardo, and the Dr. *Pavo Real*, and the ladies, had all subsided into the most perfect quietude, when I noticed, and I quaked and trembled like an aspen leaf as I did so, a long black paw, thrust through and down from the dark aperture immediately over *Padre Carera's* head, until it reached it, when, whatever it was, it appeared to scratch him sharply,

and then giving him a smart cuff, vanished. The Priest started, put up his hand, rubbed his head, and seeing nothing, again leant back, and was about departing to the land of *nod*, like the others, once more. But in a few minutes the same black paw was again protruded, and this time a peering black snout was thrust through the hole after it, with two glancing eyes, and the paw, after swinging about like a pendulum for a few seconds, was suddenly thrust into the *Padre's* open mouth as he lay back asleep; and then giving him another smart crack, vanished as before.

"*Hobble, gobble,*" gurgled the priest, nearly choked.

"*Ave Maria purissima,*" ejaculated Carera, "*que Bocado*—what a mouthful!—What *can* that be?"

This was more than I knew, I must confess, and altogether I was consumedly puzzled, but, from a disinclination to alarm the women, I held my tongue. The priest this time moved away to the other side from beneath the hole, but still within two feet of it—in fact, he could not get in this direction farther for the altar-piece—and being half asleep, he lay back once more against the wall to take his seat, taking the precaution, however, to clap on his long shovel hat, shaped like a small canoe, crosswise, with the peaks standing out from each side of his head, in place of being worn fore and aft, as usual. Well, thought I, a strange party certainly; but drowsiness was fast settling down on me also, when the same black paw was again thrust through the hole, and I distinctly heard a nuzzling, whining, short bark. I rubbed my eyes and sat up, but before I was quite awake, the head and neck of a large Newfoundland dog was shoved into the chapel through the round aperture, and making a long stretch, the black paws, thrust

down and resting on the wall, supporting the creature, the animal snatched the *Padre's* hat off his head, and giving it an angry worry, as much as to say, Confound it—I had hoped to have had the head in it—it dropped it on the floor, and with a loud yell, Sneezer, my own old dear Sneezer, leaped into the midst of us, floundering amongst the sleeping women, and kicking the firebrands about, making them hiss again with the water he shook from his shaggy coat, and frightening all hands like the very devil.

"Sneezer, you villain, how came *you* here!" I exclaimed in great amazement—"How came you here, sir?" The dog knew me, I was persuaded, for when benches were reared against him, after the women had huddled into a corner, and every thing was in sad confusion, he ran to me, and leaped on my neck, gasping and *yelping*, but finding that I was angry, and in no mood for toying, he planted himself on end so suddenly, in the middle of the floor close by the fire, that all our hands were stayed, and no one could find in his heart to strike the poor dumb brute, he sat so quiet and motionless. "Sneezer, my boy, what have you to say—where have you come from?" He looked towards the door, and then walked deliberately towards it, and tried to open it with his paws.

"Now," said the captain, "that little scamp, who would insist on riding with me to St. Jago, to see, as he said, if he might not be of use, in fetching the surgeon from the ship in case I could not find Dr. Bergara, has returned, although I desired him to stay on board. The puppy has returned in his cursed troublesome zeal, for no otherwise could your dog be here. Certainly, however, he did not know that I had fallen in with Dr. Pavo Real;" and the kind-hearted fellow's heart melted, as he continued—"Returned—

why, he may be drowned—Cringle, take care little Reefpoint be not drowned."

Sneezer lowered his black snout, and for a moment poked it into the white ashes of the fire, and then raising it and stretching his neck upwards to its full length, he gave a short bark, and then a long loud howl.

"My life upon it, the poor boy is gone," said I.

"But what can we do?" said Don Ricardo; "it is as dark as pitch."

And we again set ourselves to have a small rally at the brandy and water, as a resolver of our doubts, whether we should sit still till day-break, or sally forth now and run the chance of being drowned, with but small hope of doing any good; and the old priest having left the other end of the chapel, where the ladies were once more reposing, now came in for his share.

The noise of the rain increased, and there was still a little puff of wind now and then, so that the *Padre* taking an *alformbra*, or small mat, used to kneel on, and placing it on the step where the folding-doors opened inwards, took a cloak on his shoulders, and sat himself down with his back against the leaves, to keep them closed, as the lock or bolt was broken, and was in the act of swigging off his cupful of comfort, when a strong gust drove the door open, as if the devil himself had kicked it, capsized the *Padre*, blew out the lights once more, and scattered the brands of the fire all about us. N—— and I started up, the women shrieked, but before we could get the door to again, in rode little Reefpoint on a mule, with Dr. Plaget of the Firebrand behind him, bound, or *lashed*, as we call it, to him by a strong thong. The black servants and the females took them for incarnate fiends, I fancy, for the yells and shrieks that were set up were tremendous.

"Yo ho!" sung out little Reefy; "don't be frightened, ladies, although you do see me half drowned, and the Doctor here is altogether so—quite entirely drowned, I assure you.—I say, *Medico*, a'nt it true?" And the little Irish rogue slewed his head round, and gave the exhausted Doctor a most comical look.

"Not quite," quoth the Doctor, "but deuced near it. I say, Captain, would you have known us? why, we are dyed chocolate colour, you see, in that river, flowing not with milk and honey, but with something miraculously like peas soup—water I cannot call it."

"But why did you *try* the ford, man?" said Bang.

"You may say that, sir," responded *wee* Reefy; "but our mule was knocked up, and it was so dark and tempestuous, that we should have perished by the road if we had tried back for St. Jago; so seeing a light here, the only indication of a living thing, and the stream looked narrow and comparatively quiet—confound it, it was all the deeper though—we shoved across."

"But, bless me, if you had been thrown in the stream, lashed together as you are, you would have been drowned to a certainty," said the captain.

"Oh," said little Reefy, "the Doctor was not *on* the mule in crossing—no, no, Captain, I knew better—I had him in tow, sir; but after we crossed he was so faint and chill, that I had to lash myself to him to keep him from sliding over the animal's counter, and walk he could not."

"But, Master Reefpoint, why came you back? did I not desire you to remain in the Firebrand, sir?"

The midshipman looked nonplussed. "Why, Captain, I forgot to take my clothes with me, and—and—in truth, sir, I thought our surgeon would be of

more use than any outlandish *Galipot* that you could carry back."

The good intentions of the lad saved him farther reproof, although I could not help smiling at his coming back for his clothes, when his whole wardrobe on starting was confined to the two false collars and a tooth-brush.

"But where is the young lady?" said the Doctor.

"Beyond your help, my dear Doctor," said the skipper; "she is dead—all that remains of her you see within that small railing there."

"Ah, indeed!" quoth the *Medico*, poor girl—poor girl—deep decline—wasted, terribly wasted," said he, as he returned from the railing of the altar-piece, where he had been to look down upon the body; and then, as if there never had been such a being as poor Maria Olivera in existence, he continued, "Pray, Mr. Bang, what may you have in that bottle?"

"Brandy, to be sure, Doctor," said Bang.

"A thimbleful then, if you please."

"By all means"—and the planting attorney handed the black bottle to the surgeon, who applied it to his lips, without more circumlocution.

"Poisoned—Oh, gemini!"

"Why, Doctor," said N——, "what has come over you?"

"Poisoned, Captain—only taste."

The bottle contained soy. It was some time before we could get the poor man quieted; and when at length he was stretched along a bench, and the fire was stirred up, and new wood added to it, the fresh air of early morning began to be scented. At this time we missed *Padre Carera*, and, in truth, we all fell fast asleep; but in about an hour or so afterwards, I was awoke by some one stepping across me. The

same cause had stirred N——. It was Aaron Bang, who had been to look out at the door.

"I say, Cringle, look here—the *Padre* and the servants are digging a grave close to the chapel—are they going to bury the poor girl so suddenly?"

I stepped to the door, the wind had entirely fallen but the rain fell fast—the small chapel door looked out on the still swollen, but subsiding river, and beyond that on the mountain, which rose abruptly from from the opposite bank. On the side of the hill was situated a negro village, of about thirty huts, where lights were already twinkling, as if the inmates were preparing to go forth to their work. Far above them, on the ridge, there was a clear cold streak towards the east, against which the outline of the mountain, and the large trees which grew on it, were sharply cut out; but overhead, the firmament was as yet dark and threatening. The morning star had just risen, and was sparkling bright and clear through the branches of a magnificent tree, that shot out from the highest part of the hill; it seemed to have attracted the Captain's attention as well as mine.

"Were I romantic now, Mr. Cringle, I could expatiate on that view. How cold, and clear, and chaste, every thing looks! The elements have subsided into a perfect calm, every thing is quiet and still, but there is no warmth, no comfort in the scene."

"What a soaking rain!" said Aaron Bang; "why, the drops are as small as pin points, and so thick!—a Scotch mist is a joke to them. Unusual all this, Captain. You know *our* rain in Jamaica usually descends in bucketsful, unless it be regularly set in for a week, and then, but then only, it becomes what in England we are in the habit of calling a *soaking* rain. One good thing, however,—while it descends so qui-

etly, the earth will absorb it all, and that furious river will not continue swollen."

"Probably not," said I.

"Mr. Cringle," said the skipper, "do you mark that tree on the ridge of the mountain, that large tree in such conspicuous relief against the eastern sky!"

"I do, Captain. But, bless me! what necromancy have we here? It seems to sink into the mountain top—why, I only see the uppermost branches now. It has disappeared, and yet the outline of the hill is as distinct and well defined as ever; I can even see the cattle on the ridge, although they are running about in a very incomprehensible way, certainly."

"Hush!" said Don Ricardo, "Hush!—the Padre is reading the funeral service in the chapel, preparatory to the body being brought out."

And so he was. But a low grumbling noise, gradually increasing, was now distinctly audible. The monk hurried on with the prescribed form—he finished it—and we were about lifting the body to carry it forth—Bang and I being in the very act of stooping down to lift the bier, when the Captain sung out sharp and quick,—"Here, Tom!"—the urgency of the appeal abolishing the *Mister*—"Here! zounds, the whole hill-side is in motion!" And as he spoke I beheld the negro village, that hung on the opposite bank gradually fetch way, houses, trees, and all, with a loud, harsh, grating sound.

"Heaven defend us!" I involuntarily exclaimed.

"Stand clear," shouted the skipper; "the whole hill-side opposite is under weigh, and we shall be bothered here presently.

He was right—the entire face of the hill over against us was by this time in motion, sliding over the substratum of rock like a first-rate gliding along

the well-greased *ways* at launching—an *earthy* avalanche. Presently the rough, rattling, and crashing sound, from the disrupture of the soil, and the breaking of the branches, and tearing up by the roots of the largest trees, gave warning of some tremendous incident. The lights in the huts still burned, but houses and all continued to slide down the declivity; and anon a loud startled exclamation was heard here and there, and then a pause, but the low mysterious hurtling sound never ceased.

At length a loud and continuous yell echoed along the hill-side. The noise increased—the rushing sound came stronger and stronger—the river rose higher, and roared louder; it overleaped the lintel of the door—the fire on the floor hissed for a moment, and then expired in smouldering wreaths of white smoke—the discoloured torrent gurgled into the chapel, and reached the altar-piece; and while the cries from the hill-side were highest, and bitterest, and most despairing, it suddenly filled the chapel to the top of the low door-post; and although the large tapers which had been lit near the altar-piece were as yet unextinguished, like meteors sparkling on a troubled sea, all was misery and consternation. "Have patience, and be composed, now," shouted Don Ricardo. "If it increases, we can escape through the apertures here, behind the altar-piece, and from thence to the high ground beyond. The heavy rain has loosed the soil on the opposite bank, and it has slid into the river-course, negro houses and all. But be composed, my dears—nothing supernatural in all this; rest assured, although the river has unquestionably been forced from its channel, that there is no danger, if you will only maintain your self-possession."

And there we were—an inhabitant of a cold climate cannot go along with me in the description. We were all alarmed, but we were not *chilled*—cold is a great daunter of bravery. At New Orleans, the black regiments, in the heat of the forenoon, were really the most efficient corps of the army; but in the morning, when the hoar frost was on the long wire grass, they were but as a broken reed. "Him too *cold* for *brave* to-day," said the sergeant of the Grenadier Company of the West India regiment, which was brigaded in the ill-omened advance, when we attacked New Orleans; but here, having heat, and seeing none of the women egregiously alarmed, we all took heart of grace, and really there was no quailing amongst us."

Senora Campana, and her two nieces, Senora Cangrejo and her angelic daughter, had all betaken themselves to a sort of seat, enclosing the altar in a semicircle, with the peas-soup coloured water up to their knees. Not a word—not an exclamation of fear escaped from them, although the gushing eddies from the open door showed that the soil from the opposite hill was fast settling down and usurping the former channel of the river. "All very fine this to read of," at last exclaimed Aaron Bang. "Zounds, we shall be drowned. Look out, N——. Tom Cringle, look out; for my part, I shall dive through the door, and take my chance."

"No use in that," said Don Ricardo; "the two round openings there at the west end of the chapel, open on a dry shelf, from which the ground slopes easily upward to the house; let us put the ladies through those, and then we males can shift for ourselves as we best may."

At this moment the water rose so high, that the bier on which the corpse of poor Maria Olivera lay

stark and stiff, was floated off the tressels, and turning on its edge, after glancing for a moment in the light cast by the wax tapers, it sank into the thick brown water, and was no more seen.

The old Priest murmured a prayer, but the effect on us was electric. "*Saufe qui peut*" was now the cry; and Sneezer, quite in his element, began to cruise all about, threatening the tapers with instant extinction. "Ladies get through the holes," shouted Don Ricardo. "Captain, get you out first."

"Can't desert my ship," said the gallant fellow; "the last to quit where danger is, my dear sir. It is my charter; but, Mr. Cringle, go you, and hand the ladies out."

"I'll be d——d if I do," said I. "Beg pardon, sir; I simply mean to say, that I cannot usurp the *pas* from you."

"Then," quoth Don Ricardo—a more discreet personage than any one of us—"I will go myself;" and forthwith he screwed himself through one of the round holes in the wall behind the altar-piece. "Give me out one of the wax tapers—there is no wind now," said Don Ricardo; and hand out my wife, Captain N——."

"*Ave Maria!*" said the matron, "I shall never get through that hole."

"Try, my dear madam," said Bang, for by this time we were all deucedly alarmed at our situation. "Try, madam;" and we lifted her towards the hole —fairly entered her into it head foremost, and all was smooth, till a certain part of the excellent woman's earthly tabernacle stuck fast.

We could hear her invoking all the saints in the calendar on the outside to "make her *thin*," but the flesh and muscle were obdurate—through she would not go, until—delicacy being now blown to the winds

—Captain N—— placed his shoulder to the old lady's extremity, and with a regular "Oh, heave, oh!" shot her through the aperture into her husband's arms.—The young ladies we ejected much more easily. The Priest was next passed, and so we went on, until in rotation we had all made our exit, and were perched shivering on the high bank. However, we had not been a minute there, when the rushing of the stream increased—the rain once more fell in torrents—several large trees came down with a fearful impetus in the roaring torrent, and struck the corner of the chapel. It shook—we could see the small cross on the eastern gable tremble. Another stump surged against it—it gave way—and in a minute afterwards, there was not a vestige remaining of the whole fabric.

"What a funeral for thee, Maria!" said Don Ridardo.

Not a vestige of the body was ever found.

There was nothing now for it. We all stopped, and turned, and looked—there was not a stone of the building to be seen—all was red precipitous bank, or dark flowing river—so we turned our steps towards the house. The sun by this time had risen. We found the northern range of rooms were entire, and we now made the most of it; and, by dint of the Captain's and my nautical skill, we had, before dinner-time, rigged a canvass-jury-roof over the southern part of the fabric, and were once more sat down in comparative comfort at our meal. But it was all melancholy work enough. However, at last we retired to our beds; and next morning, when I awoke, *there* was the small stream once more trickling over the face of the rock, with the slight spray wafting into my bed-room, as quietly as if no storm had taken place.

We were kept at Don Picador's for three days, as, from the shooting of the soil from the opposite hill,

the river had been dammed up, and its channel altered, so that there was no venturing across. Three negroes were unfortunately drowned, when the bank *shot*, as Bang called it. But the wonder passed away; and by nine o'clock on the third day, when we mounted our mules to proceed, there was little apparently on the fair face of nature to mark that such fearful scenes had been. However, when we did get under weigh, we found that the hurricane had not passed over us without leaving fearful evidences of its violence.

We had breakfasted—the women had wept—Don Ricardo had blown his nose—Aaron Bang had blundered and fidgeted about—and the *bestias* were at the door. We embraced the ladies. "My son," said Senora Cangrejo, "we shall most likely never meet again. You have your country to go to—you have a mother. Oh, may she never suffer the pangs which have rung my heart! But I know—I know that she never will." I bowed. "We may never—indeed, in all likelihood we shall never meet again!" continued she, in a rich, deep-toned, mellow voice; "but if your way of life should ever lead you to Cordova, you will be sure of having many visiters, if you will but give out that you have shown kindness to Maria Olivera, or to any one connected with her." She wept—and bent over me, pressing both her hands on the crown of my head. "May that great God, who careth not for rank or station, for nation or for country, bless you my son—bless you!"

All this was sorry work. She kissed me on the forehead, and turned away. Her daughter was standing close to her, "like Niobe, all tears." "Farewell, Mr. Cringle—may you be happy!" I kissed her hand—she turned to the Captain. He

looked inexpressible things, and taking her hand, held it to his breast; and then, making a slight genuflexion, pressed it to his lips. He appeared to be amazingly energetic, and she seemed to struggle to be released. He recovered himself, however—made a solemn bow—the ladies vanished. We shook hands with old Don Picador, mounted our mules, and bid a last adieu *to the Valley of the Hurricane.*

We ambled along for some time in silence. At length the skipper dropped astern, until he got along side of me. "I say, Tom,"—I was well aware that he never called me *Tom* unless his heart was full, honest man—"Tom, what think you of Francesca Cangrejo?"

Oh, ho! sits the wind in that quarter? thought I. "Why, I don't know, Captain—I have seen her to disadvantage—so much misery—fine woman, though—rather large to *my* taste—but"——

"Confound your *buts,*" quoth the Captain. "But never mind—push on, push on."—(I may tell the gentle reader in his ear, that the worthy fellow, at the moment when I send this chapter to the press, has his flag, and that Francesca Cangrejo is no less a personage than his wife.)

However, let us get along. "Doctor *Pavo Real,*" said Don Ricardo, "now, since you have been good enough to spare us a day, let us get the heart of your secret out of you. Why, you must have been pretty well frightened on the island there.

"Never so much frightened in my life, Don Ricardo; that English captain is a most *tempestuous* man—but all has ended well; and after having seen you to the crossing, I will bid you good-by."

"Poo—nonsense. Come along—here is the English *medico,* your brother Esculapius; so, come along; you can return in the morning."

"But the sick folks in Santiago!"——

"Will be none the sicker of your absence, Doctor *Pavo Real*," responded Don Ricardo.

The little Doctor laughed, and away we all cantered—Don Ricardo leading, followed by his wife and daughters on three stout mules, sitting, not on side-saddles, but on a kind of chair, with a foot-board on the larboard side to support the feet—then followed the two *Galens*, and little Reefpoint, while the Captain and I brought up the rear.

We had not proceeded five hundred yards, when we were brought to a stand-still by a mighty tree, which had been thrown down by the wind right across the road. On the right hand, there was a perpendicular rock rising up to a height of five hundred feet; and on the left, an equally precipitous descent, without either ledge or parapet to prevent one from falling over. What was to be done? We could not by any exertion of strength remove the tree; and if we sent back for assistance, it would have been a work of time. So we dismounted, got the ladies to alight, —and Aaron Bang, N——, and myself, like true knights errant, undertook to ride the *mulos* over the stump.

Aaron Bang led gallantly, and made a deuced good jump of it—N—— followed, and made not quite so clever an exhibition—I then rattled at it, and down came mule and rider. However, we were accounted for on the right side.

"But what shall become of us?" shouted the English doctor.

"And as for me, I shall return," said the Spanish *medico*.

"Why, bless you, no," said little Reefpoint; "here, lash me to my beast, and no fear." Plaget made him

fast, as desired, round the mule's neck, with a stout thong, and then drove him at the barricade, and over they came, man and beast, although, to tell the truth, little Reefy alighted well out on the neck, with a hand grasping each ear. However, he was a gallant little fellow, and in nowise discouraged, so he undertook to bring over the other quadrupeds; and in little more than a quarter of an hour, we were all under weigh on the opposite side, in full sail towards Don Ricardo's property. But as we proceeded up the valley, the destruction caused by the storm became more and more apparent. Trees were strewn about in all directions, having been torn up by the roots—road there was literally none; and by the time we reached the coffee estate, after a ride, or scramble, more properly speaking, of three hours, we were all pretty much tired. In some places, the road at the best was but a rocky shelf of limestone, not exceeding twelve inches in width, where, if you had slipped, down you would have gone a thousand feet. At this time, it was white and clean as if it had been newly chisseled, all the soil and sand having been washed away by the recent heavy rains.

The situation was beautiful; the house stood on a platform scarped out of the hill-side, with a beautiful view of the whole country down to St. Jago. The accommodation was good; more comforts, more English comforts, in the mansion, than I had yet seen in Cuba; and it was built of solid slabs of limestone, and roofed hard wood timbers and rafters, and tiled: it had sustained comparatively little injury, as it had the advantage of being at the same time sheltered by the overhanging cliff. It stood in the middle of hard sun-dried clay, plastered over, and as white as chalk, which extended about forty feet from the eaves of the

house, in every direction, on which the coffee was cured. This platform was surrounded on all sides by the greenest grass I had ever seen, and overshadowed, not the house alone, but the whole level space, by one vast wild fig tree.

"I say, Tom, do you see that Scotchman hugging the creole, eh?"

"Scotchman!" said I looking towards Don Ricardo, who certainly did not appear to be particularly amorous; on the contrary, we had just alighted, and the worthy man was enacting groom.

"Yes," continued Bang, "the Scotchman hugging the creole; look at that tree—do you see the trunk of it?"

I did look at it. It was a magnificent cedar, with a tall straight stem covered over with a curious sort of fretwork, woven by the branches of some strong parasitical plant, which had warped itself round and round it, by numberless snake-like convolutions, as if it had been a vegetable Laocoon. The tree itself shot up branchless to the uncommon height of fifty feet; the average girth of the trunk being four and twenty feet, or eight feet in diameter. The leaf of the cedar is small, and not unlike the ash; but when I looked up, I noticed that the feelers of this ligneous serpent had twisted round the larger boughs, and blended their broad leaves with those of the tree, so that it looked like two trees grafted into one; but as Aaron Bang said, in a very few years the cedar would entirely disappear; its growth being impeded, its pith extracted, and its core rotted, by the baleful embraces of the wild fig of "*this Scotchman hugging the creole.*" After we had fairly shaken into our places, there was every promise of a very pleasant visit.

Our host had a tolerable cellar, and although there was not much of style in his establishment, still there was a fair allowance of comfort, every thing considered. The evening after we arrived was most beautiful. The house, situated on its white plateau of *barbicues*, as the coffee platforms are called, where large piles of the berries in their red cherry-like husks had been blackening in the sun the whole forenoon, and on which a gang of negroes was now employed covering them up with tarpawlings for the night, stood in the centre of an amphitheatre of mountains, the front box as it were, the stage part opening on a bird's eye view of the distant town and harbour, with the everlasting ocean beyond it; the current and flaws of wind making its surface look like ice, as we were too distant to discern the heaving of the swell, or the motion of the billows. The fast falling shades of evening were aided by the sombrous shadow of the immense tree over head, and all down in the deep valley was now dark and undistinguishable; and the blue vapours were gradually floating up towards us. To the left hand, on the shoulder of the Horseshoe Hill, the sunbeams still lingered, and the gigantic shadows of the trees on the right hand prong, were strongly cast across the valley on a red precipitous bank near the top of it. The sun was descending beyond the wood flashing through the branches, as if they had been on fire. He disappeared. It was a most lovely still evening—the air—but hear the skipper—

"It is the hour when from the boughs
The nightingale's high note is heard;
It is the hour when lovers' vows
Seem sweet in every whispered word;
And gentle winds and waters near,
Make music to the lonely ear.

Each flower the dews have lightly wet,
And in the sky the stars are met,
And on the wave is deeper blue,
And on the leaf is browner hue,
And in the heaven that clear obscure,
So softly dark, and darkly pure,
Which follows the decline of day,
When twilight melts beneath the moon away."

"Well recited, skipper!" shouted Bang. "Given as the noble poet's verses should be given. I did not know the extent of your accomplishments; grown poetical ever since you saw Francesca Cangrejo, eh?"

The darkness hid the gallant Captain's blushes, if blush he did.

"I say, Don Ricardo, who are those?"—half a dozen well-clad negroes had approached the house by this time—"Ask them, Mr. Bang, take your friend, Mr. Cringle, for an interpreter."

"Well, I will. Tom, who are they? Ask them—do."

I put the question: "Do you belong to the property?"

The foremost, a handsome negro, answered me, "No, we don't, sir; at least, not till to-morrow?"

"Not till to-morrow?"

"No, sir, *Somos Caballeros hoy*," (we are *gentlemen* to day.")

"Gentlemen to-day! and, pray, what shall you be to-morrow?"

"*Esclavos otra ves*," ("slaves again, sir,") rejoined the poor fellow, nowise daunted.

"And you, my darling," said I, to a nice well-dressed girl, who seemed to be the sister of the spokesman, "what are you, to-day, may I ask?"

She laughed—"*Esclavo*, a slave to-day, but to-morrow I shall be free."

"Very strange."

"Not at all, Senor: there are six of us in a family,

and one of us is free each day, all to father there," pointing to an old gray-headed negro, who stood by, leaning on his staff—"he is free two days in the week; and, as I am going to have a child,"—a cool admission,—"I want to buy another day for myself, too, but Don Ricardo will tell you all about it."

The Don, by this time, chimed in, talking kindly to the poor creatures; but we had to retire, as dinner was now announced, to which we sat down.

Don Ricardo had been altogether Spanish in Santiago, because he lived there amongst Spaniards, and every thing was Spanish about him; so with the *tact* of his countrymen he had gradually been merging into the society in which he moved, and at length having married a very high caste Spanish lady, he became regularly amalgamated with the community. But here in his mountain retreat, sole master, his slaves in attendance on him, he was once more an Englishman, in externals, as he always was at heart, and Richie Cloche from the Lang Toon of Kirkaldy, shoon forth in all his glory as the kind-hearted landlord. His head household servant was an English, or rather a Jamaica negro, his equipment, so far as the dinner *set out* was concerned, was pure English; he would not even speak anything but English himself.

The entertainment was exceedingly good, the only thing that puzzled we uninitiated subjects, was a fricassee of Macaca worms, that is, the worm which breeds in the rotten trunk of the cotton-tree, a beautiful little insect, as big as a miller's thumb, with a white trunk and a black head—in one word, a gigantic caterpillar.

Bang fed thereon, but it was beyond my compass. However, all this while we were having a great deal of fun, when Senora Campana addressed her husband

—"My dear, you are now in your English mood, so I suppose we must go." We had dined at six, and it might now be about eight. Don Ricardo, with all the complacency in the world, bowed, as much as to say, You are right, my dear, you may go, when his youngest niece addressed him.

"*Tio*—my uncle," said she, in a low silver-toned voice, "Juana and I have brought our guitars"——

"Not another word to be said," quoth N——, "the guitars by all means."

The girls in an instant, without any preparatory blushing, or other botheration, rose, slipped their heads and right arms through the black ribands that supported their instruments, and stepped into the middle of the room.

"'The Moorish Maid of Granada,'" said Senora Campana. They nodded.

"You shall take *Fernando the sailor's* part," said Senora Candalaria, the youngest sister, to Juana, "for your voice is deeper than mine, and I shall be Anna."

"Agreed," said Juana, with a lovely smile, and an arch twinkle of her eye towards me, and then launched forth in full tide, accompanying her sweet and mellow voice on that too much neglected instrument, the guitar. It was a wild, irregular sort of ditty, with one or two startling *arabesque* bursts in it. As near as may be, the following conveys the meaning, but not the poetry.

THE MOORISH MAID OF GRANADA.

FERNANDO.

"The setting moon hangs over the hill;
On the dark pure breast of the mountain lake,
Still trembles her greenish silver *wake*,
And the blue mist floats over the rill.
And the cold streaks of dawning appear,
Giving token that sunrise is near;

And the fast clearing east is flushing,
And the watery clouds are blushing;
And the day-star is sparkling on high,
Like the fire of my Anna's dark eye;
The ruby-red clouds in the east
Float like islands upon the sea,
When the winds are asleep on its breast;
Ah, would that such calm were for me!
And see the first streamer-like ray,
From the unrisen god of day,
Is piercing the ruby-red clouds,
Shooting up like golden shrouds:
And like silver gauze falls the shower,
Leaving diamonds on bank, bush, and bower,
Amidst many unopened flower,
Why walks the dark maid of Granada?

ANNA.

"At evening when labour is done,
And cool'd in the sea is the sun;
And the dew sparkles clear on the rose,
And the flowers are beginning to close,
Which at night fall again in the calm,
Their incense to God breathe in balm;
And the bat flickers up in the sky,
And the beetle hums moaningly by;
And to rest in the brake speeds the deer,
While the nightingale sings loud and clear.

"Scorched by the heat of the sun's fierce light,
The sweetest flowers are bending most
Upon their slender stems;
More faint are they than if tempest tost,
Till they drink of the sparkling gems
That fall from the eye of night.

"Hark! from lattices guitars are tinkling,
And though in heaven the stars are twinkling,
No tell-tale moon looks over the mountain,
To peer at her pale cold face in the fountain;
And serenader's mellow voice,
Wailing of war, or warbling of love,
Of love, while the melting maid of his choice
Leans out from her bower above.

"All is soft and yielding towards night,
When blending darkness shrouds all from the sight;
But chaste, chaste is this cold, pure light,
Sang the Moorish maid of Granada."

After the song we all applauded, and the ladies having made their *congés*, retired. The captain and I looked towards Aaron Bang and Don Ricardo; they were tooth and nail at something which we could not understand. So we wisely held our tongues.

"Very strange all this," quoth Bang.

"Not at all," said Ricardo. "As I tell you, every slave here can have himself or herself appraised; at any time they may choose, with liberty to purchase their freedom day by day."

"But that would be compulsory manumission," quoth Bang.

"And if it be," said Ricardo, "what then? The scheme works well *here*—why should it not do so *there*—I mean with you, who have so many advantages over us?"

This is an unentertaining subject to most people, but having no bias myself, I have considered it but justice to insert in my log the following letter, which Bang, poor fellow, addressed to me, some years after the time I speak of.

"My dear Cringle,

"Since I last saw you in London, it is nearly, but not quite, three years ago. I considered at the time we parted, that if I lived at the rate of 3000*l.* a year, I was not spending one-half of my average income, and, on the faith of this, I did plead guilty to my house in Park Lane, and a carriage for my wife, and, in short, I spent my 3000*l.* a-year. Where am I now? In the old shop at Mammee Gully—my two eldest daughters hastily ordered out, shipped as it were, like two bales of goods to Jamaica—my eldest son obliged to exchange from the —— Light Dra-

goons, and to enter a foot regiment, *receiving* the difference which but cleared him from his mess accounts. But the world says I was extravagant. Like Timon, however: no, d—n Timon. I spent money when I thought I had it, and therein I did no more than the Duke of Bedford, or Lord Grosvenor, or many another worthy peer; and now I no longer have it, why, I cut my coat by my cloth, have made up my mind to perpetual banishment here, and I owe no man a farthing.

"But all this is wandering from the subject. We are now asked, in direct terms, to free our slaves. I will not even glance at the injustice of this demand, the horrible infraction of rights to which it would lead; all this I will leave untouched; but, my dear fellow, were men in your service or in the army to do us justice, each in his small sphere in England, how much good might you not do us? Officers of rank are, of all others, the most influential witnesses we could adduce, if they, like you, have had opportunities of judging for themselves. But I am rambling from my object. You may remember my *escapade* into Cuba, a thousand years ago, when you were lieutenant of the Firebrand. Well, you may remember Don Ricardo's doctrine regarding the gradual emancipation of the negroes, and how he saw his plan in full operation—at least I did, for you knew little of these matters. Well, last year I made a note of what then passed, and sent it to an eminent West India merchant in London, who had it published in the Courier, but it did not seem to please either one party or the other; a signal proof, one would have thought, that there was some good in it. At a later period, I requested the same gentleman to have it published in Blackwood, where it would, at least have had a fair trial on its

own merits, but it was refused insertion.—My very worthy friend, * * * who acted for old Kit, at that time, as secretary of state for colonial affairs, did not like it, I presume; it trenched a little, it would seem, on the integrity of his great question; it approached to something like *compulsory manumission*, about which he *does* rave. Why will he not think on this subject like a Christian man? The country—I say so—*will never sanction the retaining in bondage of any slave, who is willing to pay his master his fair appraised value.*

"Our friend * * * injures *us*, and himself, too, a *leetle* by his ultra notions. However, hear what I propose, and what, as I have told you formerly, was published in the Courier by no less a man than Lord ——.

"'*Scheme for the gradual Abolition of Slavery.*

"'The following scheme of redemption for the slaves in our colonies is akin to a practice that prevails in some of the Spanish settlements.

"'We have now bishops, (a most excellent measure,) and we may presume that the inferior clergy will be much more efficient than heretofore. It is, therefore, proposed,—That every slave, on attaining the age of twenty-one years, should be, by act of Parliament, competent to apply to his parish clergyman, and signify his desire to be appraised. The clergyman's business would then be to select two respectable appraisers from amongst his parishioners, who should value the slave, calling in an umpire if they disagreed.

"'As men even of good principles will often be more or less swayed by the peculiar interests of the body to which they belong, the rector should be in-

structed, if he saw any flagrant swerving from an honest appraisement, to notify the same to his bishop, who, by application to the governor, if need were, could thereby rectify it. When the slave was thus valued, the valuation should be registered by the rector, in a book to be kept for that purpose, an attested copy of which should be annually lodged amongst the archives of the colony.

"'We shall assume a case, where a slave is valued for 120*l.*, Jamaica currency. He, soon, by working *by*-hours, selling the produce of his provision grounds, &c., acquires 20*l.*; and how easily and frequently this is done, every one knows, who is at all acquainted with West India affairs.

"'He then *shall have a right* to pay to his owner this 20*l.* as the price of *his Monday for ever*, and his owner shall be bound to receive it. A similar sum would purchase him his freedom on Tuesday; and other four instalments, to use a West India phrase, would *buy him free* altogether. You will notice, I consider that he is already free on the Sunday. Now, where is the insurmountable difficulty here? The planter may be put to inconvenience, certainly, great inconvenience, but *he has compensation*, and the slave *has his freedom—if he deserves it;* and as his emancipation, nine times out of ten, would be a work of time, he would, as he approached absolute freedom, become more civilized, that is, more fit to be free; and as he became more civilized, new wants would spring up, so that when he was finally free, he would not be content to work a day or two in the week for subsistence merely.—He would work the whole six to buy many little comforts, *which, as a slave suddenly emancipated, he never would have thought of.*

"'As the slave becomes free, I would have his owner's allowance of provisions and clothing decrease gradually.

"'It may be objected—"Suppose slaves, partly free, to be taken in execution, and sold for debt." I answer, let them be so. Why cannot three days of a man's labour be sold by the deputy marshal as well as six?

"'Again—"suppose the gang be mortgaged, or liable to *judgments* against the owner of it." I still answer, let it be so—only, in this case let the slave pay his instalments into court, in place of paying them to his owners, and let him apply to his rector for information in such a case.

"'By the register I would have kept, every one could at once see what property an owner had in his gang—that is, how many were actually slaves, and how many were in progress of becoming free. *Thus, well-disposed and industrious slaves would soon become freemen. But the idle and worthless would still continue slaves, and why the devil shouldn't they?*

"'(Signed) A. B——.'"

There does seem to be a rough, yet vigorous sound sense in all this. But I take leave of the subject, which I do not profess to understand, only I am willing to bear witness in favour of my old friends, so far as I can, conscientiously.

We returned next day to Santiago, and had then to undergo the bitterness of parting. With me it was a slight affair, but the skipper!—However, I will not dwell on it.—We reached the town towards evening.—The women were ready to weep, I saw. —However, we all turned in, and next morning, at breakfast, we were moved, I will admit—some more,

some less. Little Reefy, poor fellow, was crying like a child; indeed he was little more, being barely fifteen.

"Oh! Mr. Cringle, I wish I had never seen Miss *Candalaria de los Dolores;* indeed I do."

This was Don Ricardo's youngest niece.

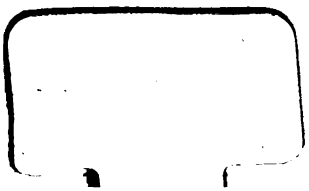
"Ah, Reefy, Reefy," said I, "you must make haste, and be made post, and *then* ——"

"What does he call her?" said Aaron.

"*Senora Tomassa Candalaria de los Dolores Gonzales y Vallejo,*" blubbered out little Reefy.

"What a complicated piece of machinery she must be!" gravely rejoined Bang.

The meal was protracted to a very unusual length, but time and tide wait for no man. We rose. Aaron Bang advanced to make his bow to our kind hostess; he held out his hand, but she, to Aaron's great surprise, apparently, pushed it on one side, and regularly closing with our friend, hugged him in right earnest. I have before mentioned, that she was a very small woman; so, as the devil would have it, the golden pin in her hair was thrust into Aaron's eye, which made him jump back; whereon he lost his balance, and away he went, dragging Madama Campana down on the top of him. However, none of us could laugh *now;* we parted, jumped into our boat, and proceeded straight to the anchorage, where three British merchantmen were by this time riding all ready for sea. We got on board. "Mr. Yerk," said the Captain, "fire a gun, and hoist blue Peter at the fore. Loose the foretopsail." The masters came on board for their instructions; we passed but a melancholy evening of it, and next morning I took my last look of Santiago de Cuba.

THE END.

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